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[A WARM RECEPTION.]

FRANK HARTLEY;

—OR—

LOVE'S TRIALS AND TRIUMPH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Old Rufford's Money," "Vincent Luttrell," "A Fight for Freedom," &c., &c.

CHAPTER I.

MARY GREENFIELD'S STORY.

"What is life, father?" "A battle, my child, where the strongest lance may fail, Where the wariest eyes may be beguiled And the stoutest heart may quail."

OLD MR. LOVEL, "Laa'yer Lovel," as the country folk called him, sat in his office, which was the left-hand parlour of a neat, double-fronted, old-fashioned, red-brick house in the main street of a pretty little village ten miles from York. It was one of the best houses in the place, having a row of trimmed limetrees along the outer edge of the footpath, a green paling to the forecourt, a flight of white stone steps leading up to its varnished wainscot street door, and thereon a brightly polished brass-plate, which informed the passers-by that within dwelt "Mr. William Lovel, solicitor."

William Lovel, whose father and grandfather before him had dwelt in that substantial old house, was one of those worthy and valuable members of society so rarely met with—an honest lawyer. Easy in his circumstances, loving

his profession, in which he had been born and bred, with a wife whose sole study it was to make his declining years comfortable, as she had brightened those of his earlier manhood, the old man had but one drawback to his happiness: they were childless; his only son, a youth of remarkable promise, having been drowned by a boat accident on the river Cam while pursuing his studies at the University.

From this time old Mr. Lovel had merely pursued his professional practice as a means of occupying his leisure, not as a source of gain or profit, and his many disinterested acts of kindness in sustaining their rights and procuring justice for persons whose scanty means rendered them unable to battle with the delays and chicanery of the law, when wielded by the wealthy, the unscrupulous, or the dishonest, had spread his fame throughout the circuit in which lay the practice of his clients and neighbours. Hence Mr. Lovel was the depository of innumerable family secrets, the trustee of many orphans and widows, and in the japanned boxes which in many tiers lined the shelves of his office, were locked the leases, mortgage-deeds, conveyances, marriage settlements, wills, and other valuable documents relating to or representing the fortunes of wealthy persons, well-to-do traders, and noblemen and gentlemen of the thriving West Riding of Yorkshire.

How much of the power of spreading social happiness or domestic ruin and misery lay in the honesty and trustworthiness of that quiet, unpretending old man! It is too much the fashion of the writers of fiction to depict the profession of the lawyer as making its practitioners deceitful, selfish, mercenary, and unfeeling, for though it cannot be denied that the

pettifogging, cost-seeking attorney—and such are unhappily but too numerous—is a social pest, yet an honourable, generous, justice-loving, conscientious and right-minded lawyer—and such was William Lovel—is a most worthy and valuable member of the society which is so fortunate as to number him amongst its active members.

Old Mr. Lovel, whom we now introduce to our readers, we knew well, and can certify of our own experience that there is no flattery in our pen and ink portrait of the man. He sat, as we have said, alone in his office. On the table immediately before him stood an open deed-box from which he had just taken a fairly engrossed skin of parchment, at the top whereof might be read in bold, black, old English text, "This is the last will and testament of ——" and to the perusal of its contents by the aid of a pair of folding-glasses, Mr. Lovel was sedulously applying himself, and occasionally making a note on a sheet of ruled blue paper lying before him.

"May the twenty-ninth, eighteen hundred and seven," said he, musingly! "this is very strange. Only four years ago, and now Abraham Morris has taken out probate of another will in the Prerogative Court. Ahem!"

Mr. Lovel referred once again to a stamped paper lying beside him.

"Yes, exactly so, and the date of the testament is the first of June in the same year. I don't find one single bequest identical, not even one disposition similar, to the will for which I was instructed, and which I myself drew only three days before! Can this be?"

Again he perused the copy which he had procured from the Registrar at York.

"Stephen Hartley is here appointed sole executor and trustee of the estate of his deceased brother, and here," referring back to the original parchment, "he takes only a small bequest and mourning ring. Ahem! there was no strong fraternal love between Reginald and Stephen, that I well know; nor, for that matter, between poor Frank Hartley and his uncle Stephen. Alas! the fate of that brave young man, lost, with his adventurous companions, in the Polar ice, recalls the ever-lamented loss of my own dear Percy."

Here the old man laid his gold-framed glasses on the parchment, bowed his head, and covered his tear-dimmed eyes with his kerchief. A heavy sigh ended something like a murmured prayer, and William Lovel was about to resume his examination of the two documents when a gentle tap at the office-door was followed by its opening, and a smiling old lady, in a neat morning dress, her kindly face half encircled with thick—we had almost said luxuriant—hair of snowy whiteness, entered the apartment.

"Do I interrupt you, William?" said she, cheerily; "I could not help it, and I know you will forgive me. Who do you think has arrived? Dear Mary Greenfield; 'tis only four short years since she left Stourton, and she has come back a widow, with a pretty boy, and herself prettier than ever."

Lawyer Lovel smiled faintly.

"Mary Greenfield a widow? Does she know of her uncle's death?"

"I am sure I cannot tell. She is upstairs. I have only learnt this much, and I hastened to tell you of her arrival."

"It is indeed a coincidence, my dear Esther. And I have just found something still more strange, which I may some day explain, but which is yet a mystery to myself. In fact, I am at this moment engaged in reading Reginald Hartley's will; but this is a professional secret, Hetty, for the present at least. Tell Mary Greenfield I will be with you upstairs in five minutes; and hark ye, Hetty, tell her I say she must stay to dinner with us. I'll take no excuses."

Mrs. Lovel quitted the room as she had entered it, and the lawyer proceeded methodically and leisurely to fold first the parchment, which he deposited in the deed-box, and which he farther carefully locked with a small bright steel key of quaint shape and many wards; then arranging and docketing several papers, he tied them neatly with the professional red-tape and consigned them to a nest of lettered pigeonholes. Next he opened a large ruled diary, bound in dark morocco, and having entered certain memoranda therein, consulted his massive gold chronometer.

"Ten minutes past one. Bless us, how time runs away."

Then, throwing his dark morning gown over the high back of his office chair, he donned a clerical-looking coat of stout but fine black cloth, and adjusting his large white cravat and upstanding collar, the genial old gentleman smiled in the glass, and casting off the lawyer became the genial host, as he walked out into the passage and called out:

"I'm coming, Hetty. Now, Sally," with a look in at the kitchen-door, "what are we to have for dinner? Run down to Scalle's and get a bit of fish; we've got a visitor, Sally. Why, bless us—"

But here Mr. Lovel was unceremoniously stopped, both his hands being seized and his cheek heartily saluted by the rosy lips of Mary Greenfield, who, the next moment, her pale blue eyes swimming in tears of joy, greeted with girlish effusion her oldest friend.

There was a pleasant afternoon in that old house with these good people, and it was to sympathising hearts and attentive listeners that Mary Greenfield related her little history.

THE STORY OF MARY GREENFIELD.

"And so you never received either of the long letters I wrote to you from Germany?" said their visitor. "Well, I fear that one who should have comforted and have protected me, and in

whom I wholly confided, betrayed his trust in more than one respect."

The young widow gave a gentle sigh, and paused for a few moments as if in sad retrospection of the past.

"Well, my dear friends, if not wearying you I will proceed. You remember well why I determined to leave my home, though I believe poor Mr. Hartley would never have parted with me but for that dreadful persecution of Abraham Morris. He, too, alas! has gone to his rest," and she wiped away an unbidden tear; "and I have come back, my dear old friend, to my native land, with my dear boy here, to seek, by my own exertions, a subsistence for us both."

"Which you will not have far to seek, I'm thinking," said old Mr. Lovel, with a quiet smirk and a wink of the eye at his spouse. "But where's the story you promised us? All about what you did and saw and thought of Germany and the German people, and how you got married and—"

"It is rather sad than cheerful, dear friends, but I will satisfy your kindly curiosity in as few words as I am able. When I heard, through the German professor at York College, that he was commissioned to find a suitable young Englishwoman to take entire charge of two children in a wealthy family, and to superintend their studies in the English language, my joy was great."

"Herr von Ulrich, of Hamburg, in whose family at Hamburg I was engaged, was a rich and honoured burgher, one of the merchant princes of that great Hanse town which, before the mighty wars of the Napoleonic Empire, boasted itself as 'The Free City.' It is now, by the power of French conquest, a provincial port of the all-pervading French conqueror, bound in the iron chains of his Berlin and Milan decrees. Indeed, when I arrived there, French influence was paramount. French officers were everywhere, and the mere uniform of the Imperial army was a passport in every grade of society, however personally unwelcome the wearer might be to the subjugated Germans."

"I soon found that not a few of the soldiers of fortune who held commissions in the conqueror's army were themselves Germans, Italians, Belgians, Dutchmen, Poles, in short of every nationality. There were Prussians, too, men of the nation that stood by while British, Dutch, Italian, Austrian, and Rhine-State armies were beaten, and who have since drained the cup of disaster and defeat at Jena and Eylau, and become the untrusting ally of the all-conquering emperor. My excellent master, Herr von Ulrich, was one of the magnates of the city, and in virtue of his position, although a patriotic lover of the Vaterland, was compelled to stifle his feelings, and receive with courtesy such French officers as might honour him with their patronising company. For myself, I was one of this amiable family, for Herr von Ulrich was a widower, and my position in the household was well-nigh that of a second mother, young and inexperienced as I am, to his two dear children. But evil days were at hand."

"Among the guests at his frequent entertainments, for his position as one of the Corporation of the city compelled them, however distasteful it might be to his personal habits and feelings, were many distinguished foreigners, and of these Colonel Duverrier—such was the name he then passed by—was a frequent guest and a trusty friend of the family. The times were critical and perilous, and Herr von Ulrich was suspected of holding communication with England, then rigorously excluded by Napoleonic decrees from all commerce with continental Europe. On I know not what charge, my generous and good master was suddenly arrested, his papers sealed up and seized, and himself carried before the French Marshal, Davoust, to answer for I know not what high crimes and misdemeanours. At this distressing juncture arrived almost the only communication I received during my long absence. It was an English newspaper, which confirmed my worst fears; and here poor Mary burst into an agony of weeping, and tears choked her utterance."

"Calm yourself, my dear child," interposed Mr. Lovel, while his wife busied herself in kindly efforts to mitigate her grief. "Calm yourself. You may spare us the narrative. It was the Hull newspaper, I presume, which contained the account of the loss of the ship 'North Star,' and the return of the whaling fleet to England. Though four long years have passed, my dear Mary, we have even yet no precise news of the fate of those brave fellows who were frozen in. There is yet hope that—" but the old man's voice faltered, for the hope his lips uttered found no echo in his heart.

Mary looked up eagerly, gazing through her tears.

"Yes," said he, resuming his comforting speech, "though four winters have passed, and no tidings of the 'North Star' have come home, several whaling captains I have spoken to have resolved to search the spot in Davis's Straits where the ice-bound ship, which its brave crew refused to abandon, was last seen. Here, Mary, one glass of wine, and we will defer the rest until later in the day. There's a happy future in store for all who submit cheerfully to the immutable decrees of heaven, which orders all things for the best."

Poor Mary gradually resumed a resigned and placid calmness. A neat repast was served, pleasant chat beguiled the time of its consumption, in which Esther Lovel took her full share. Bypass scenes, events, and persons were talked over with feminine garrulity, and the old-fashioned silver urn, with its correspondent antique teapot, ever and sugar-bowl, were shining on the table before Mr. Lovel, who had certainly taken what he called "forty winks" in his easy chair, suddenly awoke with his usual ejaculation of "Bless us! what have I been asleep more than an hour? I beg your pardon, Mary, a—a—a—"

"Rosenthal!" said Mary, quietly.

"Oh, ah! Marry Rosenthal—rather a pretty name; but letting that pass, Mary, just tell us a little more about yourself and your adventures, for there's nothing that concerns you that does not interest myself and Esther as though you are one of our own flesh and blood."

Mary blushed her thanks, and resumed:

"No one can tell what it is to be alone in a foreign country and among strangers, and indeed I felt wretched to the last degree. Of course, in my position I knew nothing of the true state of outward affairs farther than that my patron was arrested, and as I was assured, in peril of his life. The person who communicated these scant particulars to me was Colonel Duverrier, who had long treated me with marked and deferential attention. He now informed me, confidentially, and like a weak girl I felt proud of the confidence, that he was by birth a German, that his name was not Duverrier, but Rosenthal, and that he wore the detested uniform of the Corsican tyrant, to further, when the time should come, the deliverance of his countrymen. Then he told me he had been enabled to obtain the care and custody, for the time being, of the confiscated property of Herr von Ulrich, whom he had yet hoped to save from the malice of his enemies. With this mingled tender expressions of interest for my welfare, dark hints of the suspicion and peril in which everyone owning England as their birthland unhappily stood, and ended by declaring himself my devoted friend and protector."

"M. Rosenthal was a man slightly past the middle age, of military bearing, and perfect self-possession and coolness. He saw the impression he had made, as I thanked him with tears of gratitude, and invoked blessings on his head for his kindness to an unprotected orphan. He pressed me in his arms, imprinted a fatherly kiss upon my forehead, and murmuring something of which I hardly dared believe the real meaning, left me with a promise to return so soon as the council of officers at the Stadthaus should break up. Alas! that fiendish treachery should bear such a noble and fair outside! The next day Rosenthal was more explicit. He had observed my few English books, and though he spoke our language very imperfectly he could read it with facility. He professed to be a

Lutheran, and after a declaration of his fervent admiration of my humble self, proposed to secure my safety, my position in society, and, as he said, my lifelong happiness, if his devotion could ensure it to me. I was overwhelmed and remained silent. He interpreted my silence as consent, and proceeded to say, that his friend, a Lutheran minister, would perform the ceremony privately in an adjoining church. He ended by declaring I should have ample time to consider my answer to what he feared too abrupt a proposal. That he was that very night compelled to depart for Holland, on a secret mission to King Louis Bonaparte, connected with his efforts for his friend Herr von Ulrich's release, whence he could not hope to return in less than seven days.

"A conflict of feelings still forbade me speech. A sharp pang of misgiving shot through my heart. Yet why should I refuse what seemed to me then both my manifest destiny and happy deliverance. He again kissed my forehead and left the apartment. In less than half an hour he returned with two military friends, an elderly female, and a Protestant clergyman. I was a passive victim. Indeed I scarcely remember the service and prayers read by the minister, or the responses dictated by him, which I mechanically repeated. The ceremony was over, and the witnesses—one I understood to be a notary—attested our union. The party retired, except the elderly female and my husband, who after tenderly commending me to her care, gave her a well-filled purse for my use, and kissing me more fervently than before, left me with many protestations of love. Secluded from the world I learned nothing from without, but it was indeed a bitter pang when on the third day a military officer appeared and declared that my two precious charges, the children of my kind master, Herr von Ulrich, were ordered to be taken from me and entrusted to the care of a female relative, who dwelt hard by in Altona. A conversation with these men gave rise to fears and doubts that filled me with horror. One of them, in an incidental way, said, that M. Duverrier (how little did he suspect my relationship to the subject of his talk!) was "a clever fellow," adding, "but must be more than clever if he succeeds in substantiating his denunciation of Herr Ulrich, though he has got on the old merchant's blind side by worming himself into his confidence."

"Pooh," replied the other; "Ulrich's too rich to get off, when his judges mean to share the spoils of the condemned among them. Besides, don't you know that Duverrier's in the President of the Court Martial's debt, and how is he to pay him, unless out of Ulrich's money boxes? The colonel's always shaking his elbow while he has a napoleon to put on the red or black."

"There was much more talk of this kind, from which I could gather that my husband was an inveterate gambler, and that in these men's opinion he was a spy and a delator in the French interest. Nevertheless, I clung to the hope that they, not I, were deceived in him. A fortnight elapsed; I cannot tell you how I instinctively dreaded my husband's return, and wished his absence prolonged. He returned, however, full of tenderness and apparent candour, impressing upon me that his possession of Herr Ulrich's house and property was a deep laid scheme to prevent its spoliation, until at last I was weak enough to believe him. Time wore on, and I was still secluded from all female society, save that of my elderly duenna, whom I found had been a confidential servant of my husband's at some former period, and at some former place, whereof she seemed unwilling or afraid to speak. I often saw her gazing at me with a look of womanly compassion, but no questioning elicited anything of her feelings towards me, or of the motives of her compassionate expressions, though she sometimes, with a sigh, lamented my lonely life. For myself I really did not seek society. An uneasy foreboding seemed to overshadow me. I felt that something fatal to my peace must immediately follow any attempt to raise the veil which surrounded me, and I sank into a listless indifference to the world, from which I

seemed to be severed, and in which I had no longer one for me to care for, no one to care for me.

"In one of my husband's now frequent absences, for the air was laden with rumours of war, and the marches and conflicts of mighty armies, this dear little cherub," and the young mother embraced her rosy-cheeked, flaxen-headed darling, "was born. Here was a tie to earth, here was something to love; here was a recompense for troubles even greater than those I have or can have to endure. Pardon me, my dear friends, I will hasten to a conclusion. One day I was startled by a domiciliary visit from a commissary of police and two sub-officers. What was my astonishment when, seating themselves at the table in my drawing-room, the officials, producing pens, ink, and paper, coolly proceeded to interrogate me. They asked me my name; my position in the household of M. Duverrier; my age, my country, and a score of other questions, the answers to all which they carefully wrote down. Despite the coolness of official manners, I did not fail to detect an air of surprise, almost of incredulity, as they looked at each other, while one interrogated and the other took notes of my examination.

"Madame," said the elder of my visitors, "your attendance at the Hall of Justice will be required to-morrow. As the examination will be private, some scandal will be avoided if you will be so good as to suppress that part of your evidence which relates to your private marriage with the so-called M. Duverrier. I will strike it out of my notes, as irrelevant to the main case against the prisoner, and pass from the period when you became the governess of M. Ulrich's children to that when you became the—a—a—superintendent, or housekeeper, to M. Duverrier."

"I was dumb with amazement."

"Yes," he continued, coolly; "it's a rascally affair, though the exposé cannot affect the merits of the case for or against him. I speak entirely in your interest, chère madame, but if the information of the procès should be fully substantiated M. Duverrier is already so seriously compromised that another marriage will be of small moment."

"I cannot, I will not declare my own dishonour," exclaimed I.

"Ah, ma foi, that is very natural in you, ma chère madame," said the officer, smilingly; "but though the court may feel for your position, the details of this private matter will merely complicate proceedings, as there is another Madame Duverrier who claims that title, although the colonel says she is a divorcée."

"My blood curdled at the cool, cynical immorality of this polite Frenchman; but the horrible light his last phrase threw upon my wretched position deprived me of all power; a giddiness seized me, around me became confused and I fell unconscious to the ground. I awoke to the realities of the living world to find myself in my own chamber tenderly attended by my old duenna."

"Monsieur was a very kind gentleman," she observed, apologetically, "and I don't think he meant anything but your good. You English people don't look at marriage, and such like, as these Jacobins and atheists turned into emperor's spies do. They laugh at you English and us Germans too, for what they call our old-world notions. I take blame to myself, my dear, that I left it for a stranger to blurt out about the colonel's position instead of breaking it myself to you, for I was once servant to the other Madame Rosenthal. She has called herself Mme. Duverrier since her husband took service with the French; for he was educated in France, so he isn't much of a German to my thinking. But how poor M. Ulrich could have been so deceived in him I can't think. Poor man, he's banished, and his property confiscated, as they call it, and they say he's run away to America or England, if he isn't dead; for there's no telling in these dreadful times."

"And Colonel Rosenthal?" I asked, in a faltering voice.

"Oh, he's no colonel now. The French have stripped off his epaulettes and given him up to

the Prussian minister; and the people say it will go hard with him for the part he took in the late troubles. But there has been a gentleman here to-day who wishes to see you as soon as you are well enough to grant him an interview."

"At this moment a tap at the room door was followed by a servant with a card, whereon was written 'M. Nieumann, by favour of M. Rosenthal.' He was shown in, and he approached me respectfully as I sat in a chair propped by pillows.

"Do I address Madame Duverrier-Rosenthal?" said he, inquiringly, in French.

"I replied in the affirmative. Casting a look at my attendant, he added in a low voice in English:

"Miss Greenfield, I believe?"

"I started and listened with breathless attention."

"Your benefactor, and my friend, Herr Ulrich, has escaped to England, sole refuge of freedom and suffering in the Old World. My master, M. Rothschild, who confines his services to no creed or nation, has received, by means open only to our own people, the information of your sad position. The wishes of M. Ulrich, though fallen from his high position in this city, are commands with my master, M. Rothschild. The perils to which you are helplessly exposed, in the power of such a villain as M. Duverrier, have weighed heavily on M. Ulrich's mind, and he has asked your deliverance of M. Rothschild, that he may restore you to your nation, country and friends, from whom he was the means of separating you, though with none but the kindest intentions."

"Words cannot express my thankfulness and joy. Here was indeed deliverance when all looked darkest around. The next night I slept in peace at the house of M. Nieumann; the following day the interest of M. Rothschild, which was paramount, obtained me all necessary passports. But my story has yet another sad incident; for, with all his wickedness, it is terrible to think that the man whom I once called my husband should have gone to his dread account with all his sins and imperfections on his head, before the judge to whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hid. Yet so it was. M. Nieumann, on the very evening of my sailing from Copenhagen, whither he had accompanied me, in the most delicate and feeling manner broke to me what he called 'the secret of my freedom.'

"The French authorities," said he, "who thought themselves well rid of a suspected but not proven traitor and spy, had handed over M. Rosenthal to the Prussians, who claimed him as a subject. A court-martial," he continued, "and Prussian courts-martial, from the time of Frederick, have not been very scrupulous, quickly found the so-distant M. Duverrier guilty of conniving with and aiding the common enemy."

"Accordingly, the unhappy man—I cannot think of his awful fate without a shudder—was shot the very next morning in the fosse of the fortress at Spandau—and—I am here!"

Poor Mary Greenfield, for so we shall henceforward call her, covered her eyes with her kerchief, and bowed her head. Mr. Lovel wiped a moisture from the corner of his eye. Esther Lovel poked the fire fiercely in a fit of abstraction, and the silence was first broken by little Frank (who gave him that name?), who gently pulling his mother's fingers from her face imploringly murmured:

"Dear, dear mamma, don't cry so!" and was answered by being caught up in mamma's arms and half smothered with tears and kisses.

(To be Continued.)

An American paper thus describes a talkative female: "I know a lady who talks so incessantly that she won't give an echo fair play. She has such an everlasting rotation of tongue that an echo must wait until she dies before it can catch her last words."

A BEWILDERED WAYFARER.

He was a melancholy man; wayworn and weary; bent beneath the weight of years and cares; his sharp features pinched with want; his clothing in rags and tatters; and his eyes dim and humid. He walked with a staff, and was accompanied by a dog. He pulled up before Tom Bagley's shop, and thus addressed the proprietor, who stood in the doorway:

"Good sir, will you be so kind, if it is in your power, as to direct me to the nearest and most convenient way to Thunder?"

"To—what?" cried Tom, opening his eyes, and bestowing a searching look upon his interlocutor. "What d'y'e mean by that?"

"It must be some place—some locality, I fancy, so called," replied the poor wretch, in honest, pathetic tones.

"Well,—I never heard of such a place. There's none such in this section, sir."

"Oh! cruel, cruel men! Why should they mislead one who never harmed them?" And the ragged waif wiped a tear from his bronzed cheek with the back of his hand.

Bagley was curious and interested.

"My good man, what do you mean? How have people deceived you?"

"Why sir—I have modestly asked for assistance on my weary, toilsome way, and they tell me, as they close the doors in my face, to 'Go to Thunder!'"

The shop-keeper comprehended, and with a smile and a nod, he invited the man in, and, having refreshed him, sent him on his way rejoicing.

TWICE WED.

A young couple who had married against the wishes of the girl's parents, in Norwich, have played a sharp game, which would make a good foundation for a novel. The father died in 1875, leaving a large estate, with a proviso that forbade the girl entering into possession of or controlling in any way her share while she lived with her husband, and also stating that he should never be benefited thereby. Everything had been done to thwart the father's purposes in this regard by both, but without success. They, not having any control of the legacy, were slowly but surely being brought down to poverty. People refused them credit, and even the roof over their heads was sold.

Such was the history and condition of the Chaces when a petition was sent into the November term of the superior court by Mary Chase, praying for a divorce from her husband Edward on the grounds of intolerable cruelty. No one probably in that section ever anticipated such a thing, knowing they lived in perfect harmony and felicity. The divorce was granted, and Mary Maples presented her claim for the property, asserting that she was no longer the wife of Chace, which was corroborated by her presenting her divorce papers to the trustees, who immediately gave the control of the property, which consisted of houses, bank stocks and bonds, worth thousands of pounds, into her hands. Edward and Mary met again as lovers, and at the end of two days they were once more united in the holy bonds of matrimony. The wedding tour was not as extended as the first, and the ceremony throughout conducted on a strictly private scale, without ostentation.

THEIR DEPRIVATIONS.

SOME centuries ago middle-class people knew not the meaning of the word luxury. In the middle of the fourteenth century the entire stock of a carpenter was valued at one shilling. The stock consisted of two broadaxes, an adze, a square and a navegor, or spokeshave. People lived in mud huts, with a rough door and no

chimney. Improvement took place in their condition so sluggishly gradual that a century later the erection of chimneys was regarded as a luxurious indulgence, fires commonly being built against the mud-plastered wall of the habitation, and the smoke finding vent at the roof, doors or windows. Most persons slept on straw pallets, with a log of wood for a pillow. Only the nobility lay on feathers, or had glass in their windows. In a wealthy household, where the family was large enough to consume one hundred and sixty gallons of mustard during the winter with their salt meat, only seventy ells of linen were allowed for a year's consumption. In comparison with the deprivations of olden times, our wants and deprivations are prosperity.

WARRANTED NOT TO FADE.

SHE was not over much of a beauty,
But the smile on her lip was true,
And her heart's pure womanly feeling
Shone out from her eyes of blue.
Quite good enough for this world of ours,

Where beautiful things decay;
Where the flowers that grace the summer
Will blossom and fade away.

Good enough to daily contend with
The toils and the cares of life;
Fair and wise enough to wear well,
And make a true man a wife.
For beautiful things want keeping
Out of the damp and dust;
They are apt if there's lack of sunshine
To be first to tarnish and rust.

Cheerful, truthful and homely,
Tho' she has not a seraph's wings,
Her possessions are those in a woman,
That to a household true comfort brings.

Blessing her home with a loving temper,
And a bosom where dwells no guile,
More worth in our daily struggles
Than an angels face and smile. O. P.

PUBLIC SPEAKING.

It may perhaps be of use to those anxious to become orators to know that from some cause or other almost all speakers occasionally not only lose the thread of their argument, but all knowledge of what they are talking about. I have seen this occur with many of our most experienced orators. When it happens, they repeat a few vague generalisations until their thoughts come back to them, and then they fall back again into their speech. Thus their temporary wool-gathering escapes detection, except by those who watch them very closely. An inexperienced speaker, instead of doing this, pauses, gets confused, and sits down in despair. Another great mistake of budding speakers, and indeed of many who are in full bloom, is to speak too quickly. A person who wishes to be heard can hardly speak too slowly. He should pronounce not only each word, but every syllable of each word distinctly. Mr. Bright once said that nothing had cost him more trouble than to learn to speak slowly. A clear, deliberate utterance of every syllable, with pauses to mark the stops at the end of each sentence, does not produce the effect of tediousness, but the reverse.

THERE is a report of a projected marriage between the eldest son of the Grand Duke of Baden and the Princess Beatrice.

SCIENTIFIC BLUNDERS.

SCIENTIFIC men are not infallible, though their confident tone often implies that it is impossible for them to make mistakes. So long as they are content to observe patiently, and gather facts slowly, they are on the safe ground, and do excellent service. The world is indebted to careful observers, for much of the progress of our age is due to their patient labours. But when scientists go beyond facts, and frame theories or utter prophecies, they are as likely to blunder as other men.

Dr. Dionysis Lardner wrote an able article to prove that on scientific principles it was impossible for a steamship to cross the Atlantic. Before the article was published, the Atlantic had been crossed by a steamship. Isaac Newton predicted that great telescopes could never be made, because it was impossible to make a large achromatic or colourless lens. But an humble experimenter, combining two kinds of glass, made an achromatic lens, and the difficulty was removed. More recently, the most eminent scientific men have said there is no life at the bottom of the ocean, for life is impossible under such pressure, and in the absence of light. But the dredging machines of the "Challenger" found living things on all ocean beds, and that, too, at the depth of a thousand fathoms. Scientists are entitled to little credit when they undertake to say what cannot be, and their frequent blunders should make them cautious.

THE NAVY.

As a body, sailors suffered less than soldiers at the first occupation of Cyprus; yet the sailors were almost as much ashore and were a good deal more exposed. They had no time to lie down on their backs and yawn, explains Mr. Hepworth Dixon, who relates this anecdote:

"I say, Bill," a blue-jacket called to his mate on the beach, "why don't them sojers come and lend a hand? Ain't all these planks for them? Ain't they a-going to lie in these huts? Why, then, don't they help to get 'em up?"

"Well, Jack," replied his mate, "I s'pose them chaps is invalids."

"Invalids! Come they ain't all invalids. I see a lot of 'em about."

"Ah, Jack, them's a-going to college?"

"College, Bill! What for?"

"Well, you see, as they've got nothing else to do, they're going to study. And it's a hard job they've got to do. They're going to calculate how many blue-jackets it'll take to set one of them invalids on his legs again."

FASHIONABLE ladies who make a pretence at sewing have thimbles with a pebble inserted at the top. The agate, onyx, and crystal are the handsomest and hence the most popular.

In the course of an argument, a barrister recently remarked, "What does Kitty say?" "Who's Kitty?" said the magistrate, "your wife?" "Sir! I mean Kitty, the celebrated lawyer." "Oh," said the magistrate, "I suspect you mean Mr. Chitty, the author of the great work on pleading." "I do, sir; but Chitty is an Italian name, and ought to be pronounced Kitty."

THE wedding cake provided for the marriage of Miss Dalgety with Viscount Trafalgar weighed more than one hundredweight, and was arranged in four tiers, resting on a gold stand. The lower tier was wreathed with handsome flowers; the second was ornamented with medallions of silk, with orange blossoms and monograms of bride and bridegroom, with viscount's coronet and festoons between; the third was decorated with cornucopias and cupids; and the fourth was arranged with leaves and pearls. Each tier was bordered with trellis work. The cake was surmounted with an elegant vase of choice flowers.



[INEZ DE CASTELLARO.]

THE COST OF CORA'S LOVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

*"Clytie Cranbourne," "The Golden Bowl,"**"Poor Loo," "Bound to the Trawl,"**"Fringed with Fire," &c., &c.*

CHAPTER XVII.

THE BREWING OF A STORM.

Suspicious and fantastical surmise,
And jealousy suffused, with jaundice in her eyes,
Discolouring all she view'd.

It is night. The sound of lute and guitar is hushed. A cool breeze coming down from the snowy Cordillera produces a sensation of refreshing strength and comfort, and the splash of the fountain in the garden and the murmur of the river, near which the Marsdens' villa stands, all help to make our hero feel that the difference between Lima and London in November is such as would make any man in his senses prefer the former.

He has been here a week, though it seems more like months than days since he first arrived, so hearty has been his welcome, and so quickly has he made himself at home.

The city itself is a constant marvel to him, standing as it does on the banks of the Rimac in a huge amphitheatre. Hills and mountains, shadowy and snow-capped, rise on every side, save that where the gleam of the western ocean gives the imagination leave to wander away to the far-off shores of India and China, or to linger amongst the sunny islands of the Pacific. Where Nature is so grand and so bountiful it is sad to find that the tone of morality is low—as is but too often the case in tropical countries

—and Lima is certainly no exception to the rule.

Though anything but a prig, Walter Smith has more than once during his brief sojourn in the city been startled at the tone and manners permitted in even good society, and he felt that under no circumstances when Cora was his wife would he think of bringing her here.

Oddly enough, he had not spoken to anyone in this place about his girl-love who was waiting and praying for him in distant England. Once or twice he was on the point of telling his cousin Dick, perhaps with the vague hope that he would repeat the story to Donna Inez, whose attentions had become rather embarrassing, but something had always occurred at the moment to interrupt the confidence, and the pre-occupied state of his affections was still a secret confined to his own breast.

He has left the family party earlier than usual this evening under the plea that he has letters to write, and for more than two hours his pen has been at work inscribing fond words, lengthy descriptions, and bright hopes for the perusal of Cora and his mother. In this occupation he has forgotten all save his English love in her stately home and his fond mother, who he knows counts the hours with a weary heart until he shall return to her.

Thus he sits in a loose dressing-gown, his dark, waving hair flung black from his fine forehead, his handsome face softened and lighted up with the emotion that fills his heart, for in imagination he has conjured up Cora before him, modest, lovely, and loving as she is, and he feels as though his great love has brought her nearer to him, and as though their mutual affection, like some electrical affinity, bridged over time and space and made their very heart throbs beat together in unison. As he thus yields to this ecstatic emotion his face beams with a new beauty, his pen falls from his hand, and for a few moments he seems like a man lost in a dream.

But the bright vision fades. His fancy no longer sees the loved form before him, and

instinctively he takes a locket from his breast, opens it, looks long and earnestly at the fair face which smiles upon him from the ivory, then presses it to his lips.

At that moment big Nell, with a fierce bark, springs from her rug to the door, which serves as a window, breaking the glass as she does so, and Walter, startled out of his blissful dreams, is at her side in a moment.

"What is it?" he asks, sternly.

The dog growls, and paws at the glass door leading on to the veranda; the hole she has made is not large enough to allow her to get through. Walter hesitates a moment. The memory of his father's fate comes back to him, then recollecting that the dog knows every member of the household, and would not show this excitement unless some danger were at hand, he opens the door, first taking the precaution of turning down the lamp.

Nell bounds out with a rush, and sniffs about suspiciously, while her master, armed with a revolver, keeps close at her side. The sagacious creature seems to have strange notions, for she persists in going round the building in the direction of a door-like window which the young man knows leads into the ladies' apartments.

Walter calls her away, and the animal reluctantly obeys. But Nell shows no further interest in the pursuit, though she obediently accompanies her master down to the river and through the whole of the garden.

Nobody is to be found, and they have returned to their own part of the veranda, when, just underneath it, Nell picks up something white and shakes it. Walter takes it from her, calls her into the room, fastens the window, and this time lets fall the blinds and draws the curtains carefully; then he turns up the lamp and examines what Nell has discovered.

It is a lady's handkerchief edged with lace, heavily perfumed with a scent which he knows and dislikes, and—yes!—his suspicions are confirmed, there are the letters "I. de C." embroidered in the corner.

A disagreeable feeling of pain, not unmixed

with apprehension, comes over the young man as he realises who must have watched him as he sat writing to and dreaming of Cora. Since that first day of his arrival he had felt an intense aversion to the beautiful Inez.

There was something about her movements that made him instinctively think of a panther or a snake. She was strangely ignorant of everything but her own beauty, and the gossip and scandal current for the moment about her friends and acquaintances, talking freely upon subjects which no English girl could listen to without a blush.

So, since the second day he had avoided her whenever he could do so without rudeness, and the marked coldness of his demeanour had probably added to her passion, for she threw herself in his way as often as it was possible to do so, and this evening he more than suspected she had been outside his window watching him.

"I must get out of this place," was the young man's decision, "and I will tell them to-morrow of my engagement. Surely this will put an end to this folly at once!"

As he came to this resolution there was a tap at his door, and the next instant Dick Marsden, only half-dressed, like himself, entered the room.

"What were you making such a noise about?" he asked, looking at his cousin and at the curtained window. "Are'n't you choking here?"

"I haven't had time to choke," with a grim smile; "but come in, and I'll open the window. Are you inclined for a cigar?"

"I am always inclined for a cigar; but what is the matter?"

Briefly as possible Walter described what had happened, and pointed to the handkerchief as though he had not examined it.

"Whew!" laughed Dick; "I'd rather you than I, my good fellow. There is a fatality about the lovers of the beautiful Inez. I hope you will be more lucky than the rest."

"Nonsense!" returned Walter, impatiently. "I didn't leave England to fall in love, but to make money, and to go home and be married. Look at that face," and he took the locket from his neck. "Do you suppose I could think twice of any dusky beauty after that?"

"Now by all the gods at once," exclaimed Dick, enthusiastically, "if that girl has a sister disengaged I'll start by the next mail and bespeak her. Why, it's like a breath of fresh air in a dungeon to look even on the counterfeit presentment of so sweet a face."

"She has no sister," replied Walter. "I have been going to tell you about her several times, but you have not given me the chance."

"Then tell me now; but, by Jove! it looks serious with Inez."

Walter frowned, and his face became hard. He fully shared the truly English feeling that a woman should not give her love unsought, and that if she did commit such a folly, her first duty to herself and to her sex was to hide it.

"I cannot blame myself for my behaviour towards her," he said, coldly.

"No," with a laugh. "I heard her describe you the other day as a man with an icicle for a heart."

"At any rate, I must look out for new quarters," remarked Walter.

"Indeed, you will do nothing of the kind," was the quick response; "Inez is only a visitor here. This house is our grandfather's, and you are his guest. There would be a nice bother if you were to talk of living in any other part of the town. Leave the matter to me; the fascinating Inez knows from experience that I am not vulnerable to her shafts; and now I think I'll say good-night, and I wish you every happiness, old fellow; but, by Jove! I envy you," with a regretful glance at Cora's portrait.

Walter smiled. The admiration bestowed on those we love is always pleasant to us. Then the two cousins shook hands. Nell's head was patted, and soon after our hero was sound asleep in his hammock.

It was late the next day when Dick Marsden went into the room specially set apart for the ladies of his family, and where they received

their guests. He had not seen his step-mother or the brilliant Inez earlier in the day.

The large villa which the Marsdens occupied was to all practical purposes inhabited by two distinct families, the link between them being Mr. John Marsden, whose marriage with a Limanian woman had annoyed, though it had not estranged his father.

In consequence of their different habits and customs, and also of the size of the house, the wife and her daughters had a portion of the mansion which was regarded as exclusively their own, while another wing of the building was common to the whole family.

Unlike her mother and half sister, Mary Marsden usually rose early enough in the morning to give her father, brother and cousin their breakfast. She also superintended the household to a great extent, and considered herself a thorough Englishwoman. But we must return to the drawing-room, where the ladies have been taking their siesta, and are still lying in their silken hammocks idly smoking cigarettes.

Inez de Castellaro lifts her eyes as Dick Marsden comes into the room, and her glance lingers on the curtained doorway, hoping, perhaps, that another will follow him. But he is alone. A spasm of pain grips her heart, her cheek pales, and she puffs at her cigarette viciously.

After a brief compliment to Inez, Dick addresses his conversation to his step-mother. Evidently he has a purpose in his visit, for he tells her that a wealthy Englishman, whose wife and daughters they have heard of, is about to give a large ball, and he asks if she and her daughters would like to go.

"Certainly," was the reply. "Why do you ask? The invitations should have been sent."

Here Dick explained that his father did not know the family in question, but that they were friends of his own.

"Oh, yes, we must go," said Inez, roused into animation by the prospect of pleasure and excitement; "it is long since I danced, and it is sure to be pleasant, for we shall be a large party."

"Yes, I hope Walter will be able to go," dubiously.

"Go! Why should he not?" asked Inez, sharply.

"Well, there are two reasons," deliberately.

"What are they? What can they be?"

"In the first place he cares so little for things of the kind; he left his heart in England, so that the dark-eyed ladies of Lima have no charms for him."

"Bah! A fabrication!" with disdain.

"A very substantial one, then; he showed me her portrait, and I nearly fell in love with the sweet face myself."

"Why, Dick, is she so very beautiful?" asked Mary, with awakened interest.

"Glorious!" with some intentional exaggeration. "Golden hair, wonderful big eyes, with long dark lashes, and a complexion that is simply dazzling. I would ask him to show it to you but you would kill yourself from very envy, Inez."

"I should be much more likely to kill him," fiercely; "but I don't believe it—I won't."

Dick shrugged his shoulders, then addressed his conversation to his step-mother, who was much more interested in finding out why Walter had come to Lima and how long he intended to remain than in any love affair which he might have in any other part of the world.

On this subject Dick could not or would not give her much information. He knew her motive, knew the jealous rage with which she heard of any member of the family to whom some of his grandfather's immense wealth might be diverted. Her one intense and all absorbing passion was greed. The desire for gold and large possessions for herself and for both of her daughters filled her very soul.

She never considered that her favourite child Inez had no claim upon the Marsdens, but was an interloper in the household, and though her husband had once or twice told her so when irritated by her preposterous demands and

violent temper, she always found it easy and convenient to forget the fact.

It was for wealth that she had married John Marsden, not for love. She cared very little for the matter-of-fact Englishman who had been fascinated by her Southern beauty, and whose generosity was roused by her poverty and helplessness, for that was how he came to marry her, and the only solace to his deep repentance was the birth of his daughter Mary, whom he saw grow into womanhood and become as unlike her mother as it was possible for a girl to be.

But while Dick is trying at once to satisfy and yet elude Mrs. Marsden's curiosity visitors are announced, and the elder lady, who has left her hammock, graciously receives them.

Inez remains in her silken swing. She is convulsed with rage, though she tries hard to summon up all her self-command to hide it. The love he has left behind him accounts for Walter Smith's strange indifference to herself. That also explains why he must write long letters with such a glow of love and tenderness upon his face, and why he kissed that locket so rapturously just as the dog startled her while she was watching him.

It would be hard to describe the bitterness of soul that tormented this fiery woman as she lay there smoking angrily, and trying with all her might to look unconcerned and contented.

The visitors were two gentlemen, both admirers of the fair Inez—not suitors for her hand, however. Those who came to this house to talk of matrimony addressed themselves to the senorita, Mary Marsden, for Mary's father's wealth carried more weight with it and proved far more attractive than did her half sister's beauty.

"You ought to have been a nun," Mrs. Marsden would sometimes exclaim, in a fit of bad temper, to her eldest child, "a woman who has no dowry can never marry."

"But you married twice without a dowry," the girl would retort, disdainfully.

"I—yes—I was not an idiot," was the usual reply; "and when I said I would do a thing, I did it."

This, with a certain amount of excited gesture, generally brought the conversation to a close; but on the last occasion Donna Inez had added:

"And I have made up my mind, so perhaps I shall be as clever; but let me hear no more of the cloister, I was not born to be a nun."

This remark had been made the day before the afternoon when we look in upon them, and Inez at that time, though she thought her purpose difficult, had not heard a word that could lead her to feel any doubt of her ultimate success.

One constant cause of contention between Mr. Marsden and his second wife was, that he would not settle a dowry upon the child of her first marriage.

"I've enough to do to provide for my own children," the obstinate Englishman would reply, and nothing could drive or coax him to alter his decision.

Other visitors came and went, for the Marsdens were people of position and importance, and Inez was a celebrated beauty. Coffee, fruit, ices, and lemonade were handed round, and Dick was thinking about making good his escape from his step-mother's guests when "Donna Isabel Quessada" was announced.

The young man's face flushed slightly as a young Spanish lady, accompanied by an elderly duenna, came into the room. Even Inez rose at the entrance of this visitor and studiously concealed her irritation and bitter disappointment, for the fair Isabel and herself were rival beauties, so of course it behoved them not only to be particularly affectionate to each other, but to scrupulously hide every sign of vexation and disappointment.

They had spent their girlhood in the same convent, and had always expressed great partiality for each other, but Isabel had been more successful than Inez; she had married a wealthy husband, and if he did labour under the double disadvantage of being old and ugly, she philosophically took the worse with the

better, and compensated herself by liberally accepting admiration and devotion from other sources.

Perhaps that is the secret of her presence here this afternoon, for Dick Marsden, whom she has most wished to enslave, and whom she has already numbered among her conquests, has been absent from her house for the last six or seven days, and, as Byron very wisely observed:

Neglect, indeed, requires a saint to bear it.

Donna Isabel was no saint, and as the mountain did not come to her, she very soon made up her mind to go to the mountain. The marvelous finesse with which Western women handle a delicate subject without seeming to go near it, and by asking apparently idle and aimless questions elicit the explanation they are anxious to obtain, found no place in the tactics of these Limanian women, and they were wont to ask questions with a directness which if embarrassing at least allowed of no evasion.

"You have not been to see me," said the fair Isabel, as she flirted her fan somewhat nervously when Dick Marsden was seated by her side, and the attention of the other occupants of the room was diverted from her.

"No, my cousin from England has been here, and we have spent much of our time together."

"Yes, I have seen him. Why did you not bring him to call upon me?"

"He might become my rival."

"Santa Maria, what idiots these men are!" and the fair speaker fanned herself with returning complacency.

"But I will bring him now with your permission," returned Dick, who, it is scarcely necessary to observe, was speaking all this time in Spanish.

"And why now?" asked the lady, suspiciously.

"Because I have discovered he carries a charm which will protect him from the lightning of your gaze, and the sweet perdition of your smiles."

"Ah! Then what I heard is true. And it is so."

She glanced at Inez as she spoke with more of spite and envy in her eyes than of affection.

"I don't know what you have heard," said Dick, affecting not to see the glance, "but he didn't bring a heart to Lima, so there is no danger of your breaking it, as—"

He laid his hand on his breast as though he would imply that the organ supposed to be necessary to his own existence had been shattered into a thousand pieces. The lady smiled, and her cheek glowed with pleasure, but her curiosity was still unsatisfied, and she said with a pretty affectation of command:

"Since he is invulnerable, I wish you to present him to me. Where is he?"

"I believe he is in the house somewhere."

"Then fetch him," with an imperious nod of the beautiful head. "You know I adore Englishmen."

"But you mustn't adore him," with an assumption of jealousy.

The lady laughed and waved with her fan towards the door, while Dick, with seeming reluctance to leave her, obeyed.

"You have driven my brother away, I see," remarked Inez, coming to the side of her bosom friend.

"No; I have sent him for your cousin. Ah, me; how lucky you are, my sweet Inez, to have a brother, a sister and a cousin."

"Yes, very," assented the girl, bitterly, and she felt her heart throb, her lips quiver, and her cheek become red and white by turns as she saw Dick Marsden in the doorway bringing Walter Smith with him.

"Now, she will make love to him and he to her, and I must stand by and see it as though it were nothing to me," she muttered, passionately, "I hope I shall not be driven to kill them."

We will hope so too, for we cannot afford to lose our hero in that manner. He is treading upon very dangerous ground though. He is in

the land of volcanoes and of earthquakes, but the convulsions of nature are not more fierce or more fatal than the passions which agitate the soul of the woman who has marked him for her own, and who, with maddening love and hatred mingled, feels that in his very heart he scorns her. Life in this clime is cheap, the pomegranate and the love philtre are both ready to every hand; and we have it on good authority that "Revenge is sweet, especially to woman."

CHAPTER XVIII.

INEZ AT WORK.

No cruelty her wrath could leave unwrought
No spiteful act to which revenge is common;
No beast being fiercer than a jealous woman.

PROBABLY you will have wondered what progress Walter Smith had made in the three distinct problems he was expected to solve when he left England, and I may as well tell you at once that he had not taken a single step towards the elucidation of either one of them.

We attach little or great importance to things just as they touch ourselves, and therefore all Walter's thoughts ran upon that box of which his mother had told him rather than upon the discovery of Lord William Lyster or the validity of Juanita's marriage, and his most earnest desire was to get hold of the box and the documents it contained at the time of his father's death.

That those papers had long since been destroyed he deemed more than probable; still, they might have been preserved either through carelessness or by intention, and he resolved to spare neither time nor trouble in looking for them.

The other two missions with which he was charged must meanwhile wait. Indeed, he had very little hope of success in either. How was it probable that he should find any trace of Lord William Lyster, after this great lapse of time, when all other inquiries had so completely failed?

A man can hide himself pretty securely even in these days, when the telegraph wires can in the twinkling of an eye flash news of him to any part of the world; and many a ship starts on a voyage and is never seen or heard of again. Railway trains come to grief, and some unknown traveller lies crushed or cut to death. He bears no name about with him on his clothes or possessions, and Mother Earth receives him and soon obliterates every sign that could lead to identification.

Remembering how many people are killed in the course of every year, some in our great cities, some on mountain, plain, or sea, and whose identity is never satisfactorily cleared up, what wonder that Walter Smith looked upon the task which the Marquis of Lamorna had imposed upon him as by no means promising in the way of success.

Five-and-twenty years had passed since Lord W. Lyster had last been even indirectly heard of, and during all that time no clue of any sort or kind had been found to serve as a guide to those whose dearest object in life was to discover their lost brother—to this day they knew not whether he was living or dead.

So convinced of the hopelessness of the search was Walter that he had not yet looked over the papers which the marquis had entrusted to him. He had fully intended to do so when on board ship, but sea sickness, confined space, and the presence of his fellow-passengers took from him both the desire and the opportunity for sitting down to study and make himself master of the subject, and since his arrival in Lima his time had been entirely taken up by his grandfather and his uncle, and in exploring the strange city in which he found himself. Then there was the long journey he was to make to Mexico on behalf of the woman in whom Fleming Cadbury was interested, and as Mexico is between two and three thousand miles from Lima, the service the rector required from him was not a trifling one.

Not that he meant to neglect it, but it had

been quite understood between the friends that he must attend to his own business first.

Walter had had several interviews with his grandfather and his uncle about his position and prospects, and the motives that had brought him to this part of the world. He was very frank with both of them.

The marked manner in which Inez treated him, drove him to make his position very clear to his relatives, and he was especially anxious to avoid the least appearance of being an interloper who had come to grasp a share of the inheritance which his uncle and Dick might naturally look upon as entirely their own. But there was no paltry littleness in the hearts of these two men, so in this respect his task was an easy one.

"I don't think you will do much here in the way of making a fortune in a week or two," his uncle had said with a smile on one occasion. "You see you are not a financier or a mining engineer, and though you will come in for your share of the family property one of these days, as you don't intend to settle down with us for a long period of years, I think you had better enjoy your visit and leave the money-making to other hands; it won't make the difference of a real to you in the long run."

"You are all very kind to me," gratefully, "and I feel almost as though I do not deserve so much affection and cordiality; but I had another object besides mere money making in coming to this place; you knew my father, didn't you, uncle?"

John Marsden's face paled at this sudden question, and he answered reluctantly:

"Yes."

"Did you know anything of his family, or of his previous life before he married my mother?" inquired the young man.

"No," slowly and doubtfully; "he brought letters of introduction to my father, and he married Kate, your mother, within a month of our knowing him. He had always plenty of money, and he said his friends in England were wealthy, but when he died there was no money in the house and no trace of how or whence his income came to him. He was a very reticent man, and though unlimited wealth may at this moment be waiting somewhere to be claimed by your mother or yourself, we know no more about it than where to find a new lode of silver in the mountains there."

"I suppose so. But that was not my father's fault. My mother told me that he had an iron box containing papers which he was about to show her and explain the contents of, when the assassins broke into their house and murdered him. By the way, can you tell me does Roderigo de Castellaro still live?"

"He does," slowly.

Then it flashed upon Walter's mind how and when he had first heard the surname of the fair Inez, and he asked, impulsively:

"Are we related to him in any way—by marriage, I mean."

"Yes," with increased reluctance.

"I am sorry to pain you, uncle," said the young man, apologetically, "but I think I ought to know everything that will help me to discover who my relations are on my father's side, and also if possible to avenge his untimely death."

"You have," was the reply, "and I will tell you all I know."

"Thank you, uncle," for the older man had paused, as though nerving himself for some great mental trial.

"Your father and mother," he began, "after they were married lived in a pretty villa on the opposite side of the Rimac beyond the city, and near that spur of the Cordilleras which you see to the east. Their house stood at some distance from other habitations, and had large gardens surrounding it. The place belongs to us still. I will take you to see it."

"Thank you."

Then Mr. Marsden went on.

"Your mother, no doubt, told you that before we knew your father she had a suitor named Don Roderigo de Castellaro. I believe she accepted him, but my father and I had an

objection to foreigners, and thus, when an Englishman so well introduced and recommended as William Smith, showed a partiality for my sister, we were glad of it, and still more so when she expressed her willingness to marry him."

"And the marriage took place?"

"Yes, and it drove Castellaro mad with rage and jealousy, but of this we took no notice at the time, for we knew that he had become impoverished, and had borrowed money upon the understanding that he should repay it out of my sister's fortune. As soon as they heard of her marriage his creditors came down upon him, his estates were sold, and he only saved himself from a debtor's prison by flight. We were not surprised to hear soon after this that he had cast in his lot with a band of robbers, who had established themselves in a stronghold in the mountains, and that he was biding fair to become one of the most daring rascals among them."

"He had uttered terrible threats against your mother and her husband, but no heed was paid to them; it was natural that he should be angry and vindictive, and equally natural that he should soon reconcile himself to the inevitable. Your father, above all, treated the threats when repeated to him by those who overheard them with disdain; and thus fully a year passed over. You were born, and your father began to talk about going to England."

"The last time I saw my brother-in-law, William Smith, he invited me to come to his house to dinner on the following day, saying he had a communication to make to me which he had deferred for a long time, that he was going to talk to your mother about it that night, and wished to take me into his confidence directly afterwards. I promised to be with him at the time appointed, but that night he was killed, the papers he was about to show your mother were carried off, and no trace has ever since been found of them."

"Was no reward offered?"

"Yes, there was a reward offered for them, and also for the capture of Castellaro, but neither was ever claimed. You see, this is a very different country to England. We are always changing, the outlaw of to-day is the leader of to-morrow. One day a man may be a fugitive and an outcast, and the next he may hold in his hands the reins of supreme power. This Castellaro has always been an unquiet, restless, turbulent fellow, but he has not been what you call a bandit for many years past. He has been mixed up in revolutionary disturbances from time to time, and to this day his influence is enormous, especially with the mestizos and lower classes. It would be impossible for a band of robbers to exist within reach of Lima now, but there always have been, and I suppose always will be, lawless men ready and willing to follow the lead and obey the behests of any unscrupulous villain who acquires such a mastery over them as this Castellaro has done, and they serve him with a fidelity which, if exhibited towards properly constituted authority, would be praiseworthy in the highest degree."

"He must be an old man now," remarked Walter.

"No, he cannot be over sixty," was the reply.

"Is the name of Castellaro a common one here, or was your second wife's first husband any relative of my father's murderer?" was the next question.

"Yes," reluctantly; "they were brothers; but it would not be just to visit the sins of the guilty upon the innocent."

"No," slowly.

Then, another thought striking him, he said:

"So Donna Inez is a niece of the notorious bandit?"

"Yes, or, say, rather, of the great revolutionary chieftain; it sounds better."

"I wish I could meet him," with energy. "I would give a great deal to come face to face with the monster. I have heard that he has sworn to take my life as he took my father's; if he attempts it he shall pay dearly for his oath."

It is strange, but I seem to have an instinctive feeling that he and I shall meet."

Mr. John Marsden glanced round the room nervously, as he said:

"I am sure I hope not. There are, I have heard, some twenty men who have sworn to sacrifice their lives in defence of his, so the odds would be greatly against you, my boy. Besides, what have we to do with such people? Our object in life is to make money and enjoy it."

"It may be your object, sir," replied the young man, with a bitter smile, "mine at present at any rate is to get hold of the papers contained in that box—if they still exist—that the bandit stole from my dead father. It is above all things desirable to me that I should clear up any mystery that might have hung over my father."

"Yes; no doubt you are right, but there may be other and safer means of effecting your purpose. I'll have a chat with my father, and I'll look over old letters and papers, and I'll write to the people who introduced William Smith to us; but it's a long time ago—getting on for a quarter of a century, and people have died off like ears of corn cut down by the reaping hook; but I'll leave no stone unturned, and as for Castellaro, I'd let him alone if I were you; the fight is necessarily an unequal one when you have to contend with a cobra, and believe me Castellaro is more dangerous than the most deadly snake that ever crawled the earth."

"I don't doubt it, uncle, and yet I shall meet him," replied the young man, confidently; "but when shall we go to the house that my father died in? Shall it be to-morrow?"

"No; I am engaged then, and also on the next day. Let me see, this is Tuesday; we will go on Friday if all is well, and now we will join my father who is expecting us."

Walter complied, and the two men left the room. Had either of them returned immediately he would have been astonished to see a slight womanly figure, dressed in black, with a heavy veil hanging from her Spanish comb, ready to be flung over her face at a moment's notice, rise slowly from a crouching posture amidst the thickly luxuriant flowers and shrubs that stood on the veranda outside the widely-opened French windows of the room in which uncle and nephew had been conversing.

They were both unconscious of her presence, though she had heard all that had been said, and her familiarity with the language, though it was not her own, had enabled her to understand every word.

"So," she said, drawing up her figure, while a scornful smile lighted up her lovely face, "you would like to meet Roderigo de Castellaro and beard him, would you? Well, you shall have your wish; it will suit his purpose, and it will suit mine, and your English lily shall wait for you long—and wait for you in vain!"

There was a determination in her eye born of something more than transient rage and jealousy, and returning to her own room she summoned to her presence a girl, almost as beautiful as herself, who waited upon her. This girl was the daughter of a Spanish father and a mestiza or Spanish-Indian mother.

A few words in a language that was not European, whatever else it might have been, and the girl started back, expostulated, and finally entreated, but Donna Inez was imperative; her will was law, and the girl bowed her head in submission, while her mistress hastily wrote some words on a scrap of paper, which she placed in an envelope and carefully sealed:

"Before sunset to-morrow this must be in my uncle's hands," she said, imperiously.

"Your commands shall be obeyed," was the reply.

Then the girl went away, leaving Inez de Castellaro to sit and brood over her plot for winning love or vengeance. Yes, she swore she would have one or the other, and she was not such a feeble personage as might have been at first supposed; she was the only child of the Castellaros, for the robber chieftain had no offspring, and though Inez was poor and dependent, there was always a refuge for her in the

mountains, where she might, in the last extremity, become an outlaw's bride, and thus escape the dreaded convent.

But this is only a last alternative. She is playing for higher stakes; she covets worldly position, wealth, power, and love, and she tells herself that she must and will win them, or perish in the attempt.

As she thus thought, a rumbling noise, like the roar of a distant cataract, or like the rush of subterranean waters, fell upon her ears. She knew what the warning meant only too well: the earthquake was abroad, and the very foundations of the earth were to be shaken.

There was no time to fly or to cry for aid and companionship, for in the next instant the ground trembled violently, the house rocked as though it were tossed about on the waves, the walls cracked as if they were falling to pieces, and Inez fell upon the ground almost senseless with terror.

She had felt the shock of the dreaded earthquake many times before, but no amount of familiarity can accustom the human mind to experience the sensation with indifference. A terror which words fail to describe seizes upon the mind—the dread that the earth is about to open and bury everything.

It is a sense of mortal fear, yet not like the fear of death as it comes from any other source of peril: the prospect of death in other cases is generally accompanied by hope in the future, but during an earthquake the reason is subdued and the predominant feeling is that all is lost, that the Almighty has abandoned His creatures and His works, both material and immaterial, that all Nature is about to expire, and that the end of all earthly and heavenly things has come.

But this sensation, terrible as it is, does not last long, and Inez de Castellaro soon rose to her feet. Her face was pale, and there was still a look of terror in her big black eyes, and she smiled almost dreamily as Dick Marsden and Walter Smith rushed into the room seeking for her.

"Thank heaven you are alive," said the former. "I knew you would be frightened to death. Come, let us take you to your mother and Mary."

Again she smiled, and she gave Walter her hand to lead her from the apartment. She was dazed; she could not speak, but she felt it was a good omen for the success of her plot that he whom she was scheming to entrap should come to seek her.

"I shall have an answer soon," was the last distinct thought in her mind that night before she fell into a troubled sleep.

Alas! How few human beings, when they set a stone rolling down the side of a mountain, think of the mischief it may do before its career is stopped and it reaches the valley below.

(To be Continued.)

READY WIT.

A PRETTY long list might be made of men who have owed their advancement in life to a smart answer given at the right time. One of Napoleon's veterans, who survived his master many years, was wont to recount with glee how he had once picked up the emperor's cocked hat at a review, when the latter, not noting that he was a private, said, carelessly:

"Thank you, captain."

"In what regiment, sir?" instantly asked the ready-witted soldier.

Napoleon, perceiving his mistake, answered, with a smile:

"In my Guard, for I see that you know how to be prompt."

The newly-made officer received his commission next morning.

A somewhat similar anecdote is related of Marshal Suworoff, who, when receiving a dispatch from the hands of a Russian sergeant who had greatly distinguished himself on the

Danube, attempted to confuse the messenger by a series of whimsical questions, but found him equal to the occasion.

"How many fish are there in the sea?" asked Suvoroff.

"All that are not caught yet," was the answer.

"How far is it to the moon?"

"Two of your excellency's forced marches."

"What would you do if you saw your men giving way in battle?"

"I'd tell them there was a waggon-load of whisky just behind the enemy's lines."

Baffled at all points, the marshal ended with: "What's the difference between your colonel and myself?"

"My colonel cannot make me a lieutenant, but your excellency has only to say the word."

"I say it now, then," answered Suvoroff; "and a right good officer you'll be."

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

THE DRAMA.

ADELPHI THEATRE.

"THE TICKET-OF-LEAVE MAN" has been revived here, with two of the original representatives of the principal characters, Mr. Henry Neville and Miss Lydia Foote, and it was evident, from the rise of the curtain, that great satisfaction to the large audience would be the result. Mr. Henry Neville, who was greeted with almost deafening applause, never, we venture to say, played Bob Brierly with greater finish, pathos, humour, and animation. Mr. Hermann Vezin's representation of Hawkshaw added greatly to the enjoyment of the audience, for, although the character of the detective does not give scope to display all Mr. Hermann Vezin's powers, it was remarkable to notice what effect and true dramatic power were sometimes given, even to a few words, by this accomplished performer. There was never wanting a hearty laugh whenever Sam Willoughby came upon the stage. Miss Maria Harris did herself great credit as Emily St. Erremond. May Edwards, a character rendered by Miss Lydia Foote in most attractive manner, naturally won the sympathies of the house in no stinted measure. On her first appearance Miss Foote was honoured with hearty and prolonged applause, and her graceful singing of the plaintive song in the scene of the Belle Vue Tea Gardens again evoked a strong demonstration of approval. Throughout the play this favourite actress retained her hold upon the audience, never more so than in the scenes where May Edwards makes such strenuous endeavours to aid the returned convict in his struggles to regain the position of an honest man. The play is, as before, placed upon the stage with the utmost care and completeness, and a numerous body of auxiliaries help to give reality to the scenes.

IMPERIAL THEATRE.

UNDER the competent management of Mr. F. Oswald "H.M.S. Pinafore" has found a new sphere of popularity at the Imperial Theatre, and, having visited that establishment this week, we can testify most emphatically as to the general excellence of the representation. Mr. J. G. Taylor, a comic actor of great ability, and long a favourite on the London stage, as Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., is seen to the utmost advantage. His conception of the part could not possibly be improved upon. There was a combination of fantastic humour with official dignity in his manner of playing the character which rendered it amusing in the extreme. Mr. Taylor gives the idea of a swell First Lord, perfectly conscious that he is a humbug, but quite willing to accept the homage all are so ready to pay him. The finish and refinement of his acting merited the warmest commendation.

ALHAMBRA THEATRE.

"THE PRINCESS OF TREBIZONDE" was some nine years ago a great attraction at the Gaiety Theatre, where Mr. Toole represented Cabriolo, the proprietor of the waxwork show, who wins a great prize in the lottery and sets up for a swell. Miss E. Farren will be remembered as Regina, and Miss Constance Loseby as Prince Raphael, the gay young prince who hoodwinks his fond papa with the idea that he is merely fascinated with a wax figure of the Princess of Trebizonde, while his affections are really engaged by the bright and fascinating Zanetta, Cabriolo's fair daughter. There is plenty of drollery in the story of the opera bouffe, which is too familiar, owing to frequent repetitions, to require our dwelling at any great length upon it. The opera was well put upon the stage, with beautiful scenery, and a ballet was also introduced in the last act in the scene where the wax figures are supposed to come to life. This enabled Mdlle. Gilbert, Mdlle. Rosa, and other accomplished danseuses to make an attractive and elegant appearance, and the band and chorus also merited great commendation.

THE MARBLE RINK CONCERTS.

ON a summer's evening there is certainly no pleasanter lounge than the Marble Rink, Clapham Road, where every Tuesday semi-al fresco concerts by well-known artistes take place, to the evident satisfaction of large audiences. The programme began with Auber's overture "Cheval de Bronze" by the band, under the leadership of Mr. A. C. Bollen. In Roedel's charming sarabande and gavotte "Olivia," the band displayed more judgment, and rendered it with very considerable effect. Miss Emeline Dickson sang Spohr's air "Rose softly blooming" creditably. A clarinet solo from "La Sonnambula" by Mr. J. Clinton, of the Crystal Palace orchestra, was one of the successes of the evening. Madame Brooke sang Marriott's song "Because you told me so" with great taste. Mr. George Perren's voice was heard to advantage in "Come into the garden, Maud." Altogether a very agreeable evening may be spent at the Marble Rink.

THE WESTMINSTER AQUARIUM was not behindhand in providing holiday amusements, and a large number of visitors were present during the week. The various objects of attraction found their special admirers, the tank of seals being greatly in favour; and the three alligators appeared disposed to display themselves to the visitors in honour of the holiday, and were more animated than usual. The wonderful performing bull delighted all who witnessed his feats and his docility—which the children of the Prince of Wales especially appreciated the other day, when the bull was exhibited for their gratification. The orchestra of the Aquarium rendered valuable service by playing frequently choice selections of music. With the performing bull and Mr. Farini's Zulus the Aquarium now offers great attractions, and is well worth a visit.

LONDON PAVILION. — Mr. Edwin Villiers has taken the reins of management in hand, and as he is an experienced manager, there is little doubt that he will fully uphold the prestige of this establishment.

We understand that John Hollingshead proposes to reintroduce Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt to his patrons next May, and that negotiations are pending with the company of the Palais Royal to succeed her.

It is said that the Christmas attraction at the Alhambra will be a version, by Mr. H. B. Farnie, of the Paris spectacular piece called "Rotomago," embellished with original music by Planquette, Serpette, Jacobi, Bucalossi, and others.

THE remains of Robert Schuman have been transferred to the family vault at Bonn.

CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS.

WHILE the plan of renting or selling pews has some advantages, it involves serious objections, but none so great as to make us think that the spirit that first suggested, and now continues it, must of course be set down as sordid. It had its origin in a necessity growing out of a defect in spontaneous and systematic giving to the Lord, and was intended at first to supply ways and means, as well as to make families feel at home in the church; and although some have made their legal rights a plea for exclusiveness; yea, although speculators have hired popular preachers and turned churches into stock-jobbing concerns, we doubt if Christians generally have had the mercantile feeling of which complaint is made. Churches must be supported somehow or other, and the people who attend them ought to pay the bills. It makes little difference by what name contributions are called. Some prefer to call them pew rents, some gifts, while others insist that they are voluntary contributions. They are always voluntary contributions, as when a man does not desire to pay his pew rent he gives up his pew and quits.

DERRICK.

THIS was the name of the most famous hangman in English history; in fact, he was a prime rascal in that nefarious business, who succeeded Bull, the earliest recorded English hangman, in 1593. At Cadiz, Derrick hung ninety-five men, and was condemned to go through the performance at the other end of the rope himself; that is, to be choked instead of the choker. He made an assault on a woman, an obstreperous method of wooing, rendered necessary by the odious nature of his profession. The Earl of Essex, however, interposed and saved his life; in return for which kind office Derrick, in 1601, cut off his preserver's head. Derrick was lucky and grew dishonourably old and rich, and finally died despised, lamenting pathetically that he could not live to cut off the royal head of Charles I. Brandon, his successor, was not so great or fortunate a man; he was twice condemned for the crime of bigamy. He began his career by executing Strafford, and was thought to be the masked headsman who officiated at the last scene of Charles I.'s life. The ingenious machine for lifting takes its name from the noted lifter of men.

CLARICE VILLIERS;

OR,

WHAT LOVE FEARED.

CHAPTER XVII.

MRS. DORNTON'S DOUBTS.

Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,
In this green valley, under this green hill,
Even on this hand, and sitting on this stone?
Said it with kisses? Water did it with tears?
O happy tears, and how unlike to these!

TENNISON.

THERE was deep quiet and solitude around the ancient oak, which had so nearly become a tomb, when Mrs. Dornton and Lambourne made their passage from the bosage of hazel and maple into the little circus of grassy open. The woman's face was stern and set as she emerged, but after a short and keen glance around she turned her eyes angrily upon her follower.

"Rascál!" she said, "how dare you bring me here upon this fool's errand?"

The dwarf scratched his tangled red hair with a gesture of mingled vexation and bewilderment.

"They bean't here!" he muttered.

"Do you venture to play your elvish tricks on me? Beware!"

"Cuss it! They was here. I'll swear it."

Mrs. Dornton made no reply to the man's asseveration. She was now surveying the spot with some curiosity.

"Some one has been here, and that recently, I can see," she said, presently. "But why Aricia?"

"She came to meet the swell."

"You told me that he was not one of the party."

Lambourne applied his vulture-like talons to his shaggy locks with renewed vigour. The process did not seem to stimulate his dormant intellect.

"Speak the truth!" cried the woman, imperiously.

"No, the swell worn't there."

"Then why did not my daughter leave these people, whoever they may have been, and come home with you? Why, rather, was she here at all? Indeed, I can't understand why anyone should have been here."

"'Twas the same young 'oman as came in the carriage with the old lady to see ye once. I'd never seen the swell afore."

Mrs. Dornton appeared to be anything but satisfied with this explanation.

"Why have these people been digging around this tree in that fashion?"

"How should I know? P'raps they've bin a-looking for treasure or for suffin' they've hid."

"Pshaw! You are trying to deceive me."

She turned her stern regard from Lambourne's sullen, downcast countenance, and again scrutinised the tree and its surroundings.

"What is that?" she cried, suddenly, pointing up at the hollow trunk, from which at some distance up a small bright object projected horizontally.

It was the dwarf's knife.

"Dunno."

"I intend to know. Go up and see."

Lambourne cast a restive and evil glance at Mrs. Dornton.

"How can I climb up there?" he replied.

"Go! I say."

Slowly and awkwardly the dwarf made the essay. Before he had proceeded far up the tree he slipped and fell.

But Mrs. Dornton was not to be so easily foiled. Again and again she reiterated her command, and again and again Lambourne attempted to obey, but always to end in failure. At length the woman's patience became exhausted.

"Clumsy wretch!" she cried, "you are deceiving me by act as you did by word. But you shall not blind me. Is not that object up there the knife which I have seen you use?"

The dwarf grumbled out a half-articulate assent.

"How came it there?"

"Dunno! They took it from me!"

"They! Who and why?"

"The swell! I took it out to cut his cursed wozand, but he was too strong for me, he and the big dog. I wish I'd ha' had Fiend wi' me."

"Pestilent eyesore! why did you assault the man?"

"'Cause he was a trespasser. He was on our grounds. I told him to go, and he would na' and he kept Miss 'Ricia."

All Mrs. Dornton's farther questioning produced no result. To every enquiry Lambourne gave the same sullen response:

"Dunno no more o' it."

At length after a final scrutiny of the spot, Mrs. Dornton relinquished her endeavours to extract any information from her stubborn henchman, and commenced to retrace her steps to the Folly, followed at a short distance by Lambourne.

The reclusé had made her way to the grove, in a savage fury, upon the assertion of the dwarf that Aricia had escaped him and gone thither. Half-incredulous now of Lambourne's tale she had determined to return and discover whether the girl was not safe in the grounds of the Folly.

It was with no great degree of surprise, therefore that she found Aricia in the desolate mansion.

The girl had hastily but not very successfully endeavoured to remove so far as was practicable the traces of her late escapade from her person and garments.

But although she had washed away the blood stains from her face and arms, and had arranged to some degree her dishevelled hair, there were still plenty of deep thorn-furrows in brow and cheek and hand.

Mrs. Dornton did not mark these at first. It was sufficient that Aricia was there. She scowled savagely at the dwarf.

"And so you have dared to put a cheat on me!" she said, in a deep tone of concentrated anger. "And to send me on a fool's errand."

"Ho! ho!" laughed Lambourne. "Do you think so, mistress? Miss 'Ricia hain't been to the spinney! oh, no, not at all. Look at her face."

A glance at the girl's features caused an immediate change in Mrs. Dornton's ideas.

"Leave us, Lambourne!" she said, peremptorily.

The dwarf obeyed, casting as he did so a strange look at Aricia, a look in which anger was mixed with a repulsive something for which a name is lacking.

"Is this then true, girl?" said Mrs. Dornton to Aricia, when Lambourne had disappeared.

"What do you mean, mother?"

"Do not try any word-fencing with me, hussy, or it will be the worse for you. You have been beyond the limits I had assigned to you. You have escaped from Lambourne's surveillance."

Aricia inclined her head.

"Why?"

The girl made no reply.

"Now look you, Aricia, I mean to have answers to my questions, if I have them out of you at the cost of your blood drop by drop. I am not one to have all my plans of life for you and for myself destroyed by the caprice or obstinacy of a capricious child. You went to the grove to meet that insolent fellow whom I once found in my grounds and with whom you held subsequent converse."

"I do not know."

"Did you meet him?"

"No."

"That corresponds with what Lambourne said," muttered Mrs. Dornton. "Who were the others whom you saw there?"

"The lady who came to our house once. I do not know the other."

"And you did not see that man—what is his name?"

"Everard!"

"Everard what?"

"I do not know."

"Of course not. It is as nameless men—or as men misnamed—that such wolves steal into the sheepfold."

"Everard is not a wolf."

"Silence, wanton minion! So, then, you did not see this Everard?"

Aricia did not reply.

"Answer me!" cried Mrs. Dornton, stamping furiously, "and do not lie!"

The girl arched her slender neck proudly.

"I shall not do that, mother. Yes, I saw Everard!"

"He was with the others?"

"No."

"Did Lambourne see him?"

"No."

"He came after Lambourne had left the wood?"

"Everard did not come to the grove, he was there—there—oh, my, mother, it was dreadful. I could hardly think that it was he."

"What do you mean?"

"He did not speak; he did not move! They took him out of the tree and he lay, oh, so still and pale! Then they carried him away from me. He will die; he will be lost to me for ever. Oh, Everard, my love—my life!"

Mrs. Dornton's brow grew black as night, and

she advanced on Aricia with her hand uplifted menacingly. Then by an effort she restrained herself. With great difficulty she succeeded in extracting something like an intelligible account of the morning's transactions from the girl.

Aricia told her tale in a sort of sad hopelessness. What did it matter? He was dying, or if not she should never see him more. Would not the handsome lady who had been privileged to kiss his cold face claim him alone? Mrs. Dornton glared at her for a moment with a fierce light in her deep eyes. Then she strode to the door, threw it open, and called loudly for Lambourne.

The dwarf's repulsive visage looked more than usually sulky and stolid. Briefly Mrs. Dornton recapitulated what Aricia had told her.

"What do you know of this, rascal?" she added.

"Nowt."

"How could this thing have happened? How could this man's cries have not been overheard by you?"

"I dunno."

"Why should he not have been searched for before?"

"He was, mistress. I've seen parties about after him."

"I cannot understand it. I hate mankind, and this man above some others deserves no pity from me, for he would have robbed me of my child—"

"Cuss him!" broke in Lambourne.

"But a death like that is too horrible to contemplate. Villain, I believe it was your handiwork in some manner."

"Na! na! Why shoulden I do it? How could I?"

"Because you, like myself, hate humanity."

"There be others hate thissun. One o' his friends hates him deadly."

"How should you know that?"

"I'll tell ee, mistress. There were a many searched for 'un, and one big lot o' men came, and I hid up i' the hedge and heard un say 'Let's search the woods, my lord, an' my lord he says, 'na, na, that ha' bin looked though a'ready—which were a lie—and so they didn't search it. The man were t'other man's enemy.'"

"Is that all your reasons?"

"Na; he has often been round here spying on Miss 'Ricia's—Miss 'Ricia's—"

"That will do! And they called him 'my lord'?"

"Ay, ay! I heard they ca' him 'my lord,' or 'Lord Boscawen' sometimes."

At the words Mrs. Dornton turned deadly pale and staggered towards him.

"Hound!" she shrieked. "What do you mean?"

The dwarf extricated himself from the infuriated woman with some difficulty and stood gazing at her flushed and agitated countenance with stupid astonishment.

"What name did you say?" yelled Mrs. Dornton.

"Lord Boscawen!"

"It is false!"

Mrs. Dornton fixed her eyes upon his with a gaze as if she would read his very soul.

"They called him so! I knows nuthen' more," he responded, sulkily.

"What can it mean?" the woman muttered in a tone inaudible to her companion. "No, no, I must have learned of it. It is not possible."

"Describe this man," she said, sharply.

Rude and provincial as was his speech, Lambourne yet managed to give a fairly good word picture of Mr. Villiers's secretary. Mrs. Dornton shook her head.

"I cannot understand it," she murmured.

"If he speaks truly there is here some mystery beyond my comprehension. But one I must unravel. Yes, and quickly."

Her excitement and agitation appeared to increase as she abruptly bade Lambourne leave the room. When he had gone Mrs. Dornton paced the chamber for some minutes with long, hasty strides. When at last she had apparently regained some portion of her ordinary composure, she halted before Aricia.

"Go to your chamber, girl," she said. "I

will see you by-and-bye. Do not flatter yourself that you will escape the consequences of your transgression. Poor idiot! I am cruel but to be kind. You cannot fathom your peril."

Without a word the girl rose and left the room ascending to her own sleeping apartment.

"What can this mean?" mused Mrs. Dorn-ton, when Aricia had disappeared. "Whatever its meaning may be I must not remain in ignorance of it. Perhaps even this wayward child's indiscretions have served me well. By all the fiends, can he have dared to betray another?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

CLARICE'S ADJURATION.

I would not chain that heart to this,
To sicken at the rest;
The cage we chose a prison is,
The open cage a rest.

LITTON.

ALTHOUGH, out of consideration for Lord Redmond's physical weakness, the subject of his relations to Aricia had been carefully avoided by Miss Villiers in the brief interview which she had had with her lover during his indisposition, it could scarcely be that they should go through a temporary parting without some mention of a thing whose bearings on the happiness of both was of so much importance.

In fact both dreaded approaching the subject. Her lover's imminent peril and protracted sufferings had made Clarice so tender towards him that she was inclined to treat the matter as leniently as possible.

That he had some affection for Aricia Dorn-ton she could not doubt; probably, she told herself, springing more from the singularity of the girl's position than from any deep-seated sentiment of love. Indeed, how could he really love, except as a fitful fancy, a being so untaught and uncultivated as the recluse's daughter, beautiful as she might be? And what could he hope of such connection in the future?

Marriage was out of the question, Clarice thought. Men of good birth and of rank more exalted than Lord Redmond's had, it was true, taken unto themselves wives whose disparity of social position was great. But society might condone the union of even a royal duke with an actress, for example, because the latter had at least the training and the savoir vivre to enable her to step into the new circles open to her with ease and self-possession. Nor was there any insuperable obstacle to such woman becoming a veritable queen of society.

But what could Aricia Dorn-ton do if, in despite of her parent and his own, Lord Redmond married her? It would not only be impossible for him to give her caste, but she would drag him down in the estimation of the world.

This, at least, was Clarice's idea. And if she found or fancied that she found Lord Redmond still held her own image enshrined in the most secret sanctuary of his heart, Clarice was disposed to remain as obdurate as was practicable of the liaison of her lover with Aricia.

It was, perhaps, rather a temporising and feeble policy; but, then, Clarice was no fierce Oriental or fervid child of the South in whose veins passion and jealousy throb in a lava-like tide. She was simply a loving, true-hearted English girl, who was too faithful to her affection to relinquish hope of the man whom she loved for the offence of having been temporarily seduced from his allegiance to herself by the charms of a chance-met pretty face.

Lord Redmond did not await the inevitable explanation with equal equanimity. He had not, like Clarice, determined upon a course of action. Neither had he decided upon what measure of confession he should give. Despite his good qualities—perhaps partly in consequence of them—the young man was vacillating and undetermined even in a matter of so much importance as the custody of a woman's heart and the happiness of her life. He was, in fact, just the type of man—and it is one often found all the world over—who would sing, with the captive highwayman:

How happy could I be with either,
Were the other dear charmer away.

But a few short weeks ago and Clarice held his entire allegiance, and even now he felt that although her power over him was weakened it was not destroyed. Then, again, did he not owe his life to her? Had she not persisted in the search when all else had relinquished it?

But if he confessed his fault and renewed his fealty to his betrothed, what of Aricia? It might seem that wisdom dictated the rupture of all bonds between himself and the daughter of the recluse. But when had wisdom availed against woman's love and man's folly? Though he was about to be separated from the girl by many hundred miles, though she was in all probability the ultimate cause of his late perilous plight, and though, above all, it was in the highest degree improbable that Mrs. Dorn-ton would leave any opportunity for an interview with Aricia open to him, yet Everard could not bring himself to decide that he would take leave of the infatuation which had blinded him to all considerations of prudence.

He was looking more like his old self again, Clarice thought, on the morning of their departure from the Manor, as they stood side by side in the big oriel window which looked out on the broad terrace and flower parterres which stretched out behind the mansion.

Their conversation had been of little things—trivial details of their change of quarters, each dreading to touch on the subject which yet each felt must be dealt with in some wise. At last, as became the sterner sex, Lord Redmond made the plunge.

"I feel, Clarice," he said, suddenly, taking the girl's hand meanwhile in a tender clasp, "that I have very feebly hitherto expressed the thanks I owe you."

She smiled faintly.

"Let them remain unspoken then, Everard. I assuredly only fulfilled a duty of common humanity."

"Had common humanity only been left to deal with my case," replied Redmond, gravely, and with some degree of bitterness, "I fancy that I should not stand here to-day a living man."

"Why not? Surely you do not underrate the part which Captain Pleydell took in your liberation?"

"By no means. But it is not to him that the initiative was due. Had you been absent at Tremawr on that day I had been a lost man!"

"Let us not speak of this, Everard. It is enough that you are here by my side, safe and well. Only," and her eyes were bent upon Lord Redmond's inquiringly, "for my sake, do not run such a risk again."

The young man understood what the words implied.

"You have interdicted me from thanking you," he said. "Will you permit me to plead for pardon in a certain matter?"

"It is not needed."

"I cannot think so. I know that in your mind I am not blameless."

"Let us be very frank, Everard. Since you have yourself led up to this subject it is perhaps better that we should understand one another now."

The affirmative which Lord Redmond murmured sounded very humble. His eyes were downcast, his whole mien that of a man who finds himself in a position embarrassing in the extreme.

"Why were you not true with me about this Miss Dorn-ton? Respecting your meetings with her, I mean?"

"I feared to vex you, Clarice."

"Vex me! If your object was, as you stated, simply to protect the girl from the violence or even harshness of her mother, why should that vex me?"

The young man made no reply.

"It appears to me that you must have played your role of protector very demonstratively."

"I had little opportunity of interposing in Miss Dorn-ton's favour."

"The sentiments with which she seemed to regard you point to other conclusions."

Redmond's face flushed.

"What can you look for from an untaught child?" he said, quickly. "Perhaps I was the first from whom she had heard even a kindly word. One cannot imagine that terrible mother of hers guilty of any such human weakness."

Miss Villiers shook her head.

"You are not treating me with the frankness for which I stipulated," she said. "These are questions which it is hard for a woman to ask."

As she spoke the memory of Aricia's face as she clasped the old oak in her paroxysm of agony arose before Clarice's mind—Aricia's wild appeals to "Everard" sounded in her ears.

"I am the guardian in some sort of not only my own future happiness, but of yours. Do not suppose me capable of a miserable feeling of jealousy degrading alike to my womanhood and my social position. Heaven forbid! Both as my lover and my husband, the man of my choice must be above suspicion, at least in my eyes. Not he alone, but I also, should suffer unutterable humiliation could I so descend. But when certain doubts—certain questions are forced upon us by the notice of the world, it is better that we should have the courage to dare the worst—to pursue the inquiry however bitter, and lay the spectre, which otherwise might haunt all our after life."

"The world?" queried Redmond. "To whom in this little local circle is that term applicable. If any evil tongue have wagged against me it must be that of an insidious foe."

"Let us say no more of that."

"I do not defend it, although it was justifiable. But only those should brand others as false whose own truth is above suspicion. To that point we return. Can you honourably make that claim, Everard?"

The young man did not reply.

"This is not the first time that we have spoken of this matter, Everard. Before, I had only the suspicions of a third party to go upon. Now I have witnessed for myself that, whatever may be the true state of your feelings, at least this girl has some sentiment for you which led her, when she supposed you to be in dire peril, into a passionate self-abandonment which can only result from strong affection."

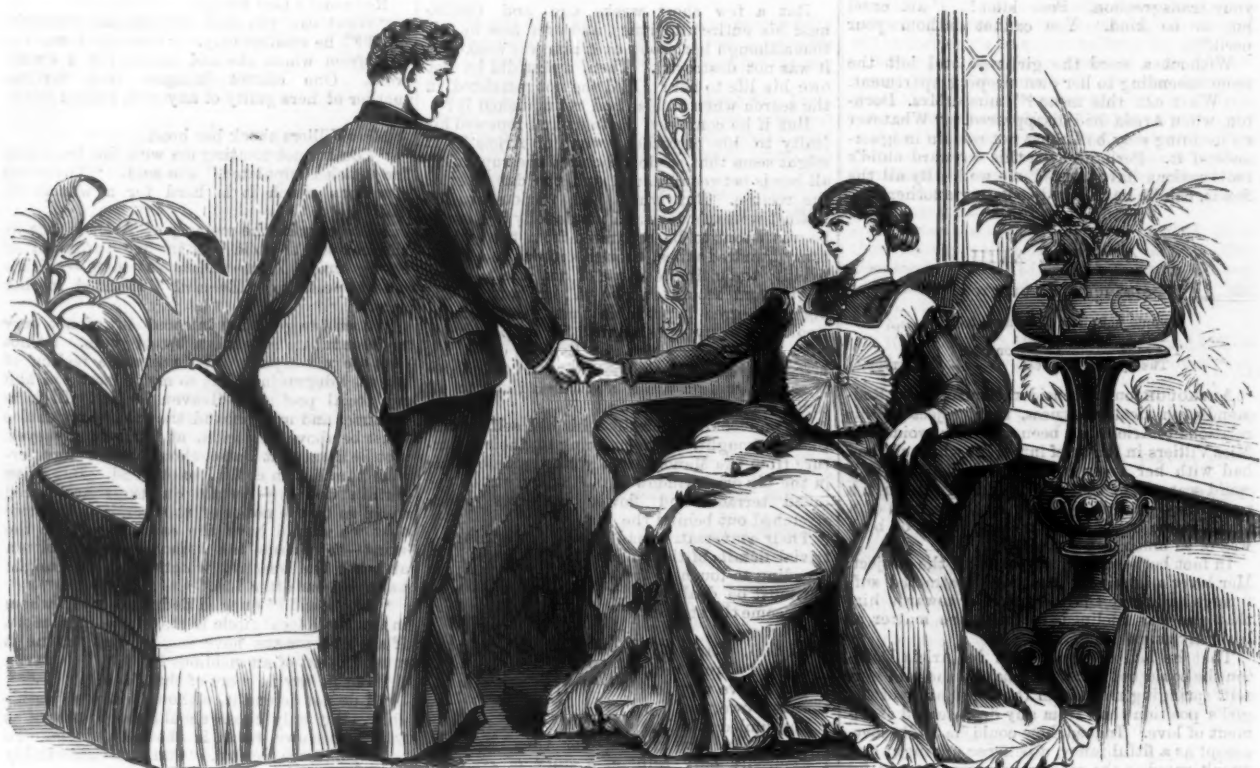
"You know that I have given you my whole heart. Is it too much that I should ask a similar sacrifice. I have the right to call upon you to do so. If you cannot, or will not, it is better that, at any cost to myself, we face the hard necessity and go our different ways. It would be an ill beginning of a wedded life that I held only a divided heart."

"You are unjust, Clarice."

"No. I am doing well both for you and for myself. I have loved—do love you, Everard. Heaven knows how firmly, how devotedly. But what is that if you have found that your love for me was but a fleeting fancy, and that I cannot make you happy. Men are less constant than we. Do not think that I would even condescend to name to you some trivial flirtation of the ball-room. But I believe this to be a deeper matter. In justice to all, even to this unhappy girl, for unhappy in all relations I must regard her, I ask you for truth and frankness."

Clarice's adjuration was not without its weight. The solemnity of her manner gave added force to her appeal. How should he decide? Now standing beside Clarice, looking down on her fawn-coloured hair, her sweet low brow, her earnest eyes, that other face which had for the time held his heart in thrall seemed to fade and become dim. It was not hard to believe that the passion which had possessed him at sight of Aricia Dorn-ton—at sound of her voice—at touch of her hand—had been an illusion.

"I do not know what you require of me, Clarice," he said, slowly; "but I think you scarcely do me justice. I have kept, and desire to keep, my troth. I cannot deny the interest



[REKINDLED FIRE.]

I have felt in Miss Dornton. The romantic circumstances of her strange position are alone sufficient to account for that. But that has not militated against my fealty to you, my darling. And if any has so asserted, tell me who is my traducer?"

"No, that would subserve no good purpose. I may then take it that you will not attempt to see Miss Dornton again. Poor child, it were cruel of you to do so. By what you have already done, evil in place of good has been brought about. The iron tyranny of the strange owner of the Folly has been more firmly rivetted on her victim, I do not doubt, and, worse still, you have raised hopes in the girl's heart which will make her rebel still more against her lot."

"I will not again seek Miss Dornton. Am I not forgiven, Clarice—forgiven, even if I have been culpable?"

The girl turned to him with a bright smile.

"Ah, recreant," she said, playfully, "you know you have so strong an advocate in the chancery of my heart that an unbiassed judgment is not possible."

"Especially if I bribe the judge," responded Lord Redmond, in the same tone, as he pressed a kiss on the upturned rosy lips.

Lord Boscawen did not fulfil his promise to see Redmond before the party at the Manor broke up and the individuals composing it took their several ways. Indeed he managed entirely to evade meeting Clarice's lover on the last day of their sojourn at Tremawr.

But Bertram Pleydell had a long and cordial parting talk with him whom he had been so mainly instrumental in rescuing. They chatted reely upon the many topics which their old camaraderie made common ground to them, but each had a subject at least which he did not care to be the first to display.

"Do you rejoin your regiment now, Pleydell?" said Lord Redmond, presently lighting a fresh cigar.

"No. Fact is, I think I shall spend a few days exploring this Cornish country with its romantic coast of iron-bound cliffs, and its associations with the 'blameless King' Arthur. I shall while away the time so almost until the Villiers' return."

"You will miss the end of the season."

"Don't care much about it, old boy. Row is getting thin. The divas are leaving both operahouses. London is insufferably hot. Shan't lose much by absence."

Lord Redmond puffed meditatively, watching the smoke rings as they rose and broke in the leaves of the climbers which draped the verandah.

"You're a lucky man, Redmond," observed the soldier presently.

"Ah! May I ask your reason for that sage conclusion?"

"You have all that a man needs to make earth a paradise—the heart of a woman who loves you with a supreme love—and the hate of a disappointed enemy."

"I don't see the latter is an element of felicity."

"The deuce you don't! A baulked and baffled rival enhances a man's success by contrast, as one eats olives to add zest to the wine."

"But I am not aware that such a being exists."

"Aren't you? I gave you credit for greater penetration. Now I am going to ask a straightforward question, which, it appears to me, the people here strongly shirk putting to you. By whom do you suppose you were spirited into that very uncomfortable vegetable prison whence I had the pleasure of assisting to remove you?"

"I haven't the remotest idea. Confound it, old boy, please choose some more cheerful subject of conversation."

"Stay! There's nothing like a man knowing his foes. Who has an interest in hating you?"

"I'll give it up, Pleydell," said Lord Redmond, leaning back indolently.

"Then I'll tell you. The man who wishes to win from you your promised bride."

The words aroused Redmond.

"There is no such person."

"Pardon me, there is—and he is of my race—though, I fear, little credit to it."

"You mean—"

"Boscawen? Yes."

"Nonsense! I have seen no indication of desires on his part to supplant me."

"Perhaps they have become more obvious since your enforced absence from the Villiers' family circle. I, at least, have noticed them, and desire to put you on your guard."

"Thanks very much."

"Not at all. You are one of my oldest friends. It is true that Boscawen is of our race, and that no one rejoiced more than myself when his discovery gave a son to the dear old man whom I have loved as a second father. But I have been entirely disappointed in this quondam secretary of your father-in-law who is to be. I can read him like an open book in spite of his sphinx-like phiz and his clever wiles. He is a deceitful, dangerous fellow."

"You think so?"

"I am convinced of it. He loves Miss Villiers, in his fashion, with an absorbing passion. That too I can see. And from some words which have escaped her father at unguarded moments I am satisfied that he is your enemy and has set his machinations at work against you. I should not like to accuse him of being accessory to an attempt which looked very like murder!"

"You do not mean—"

"I mean that I believe Lord Boscawen could have put the searchers very near to the right trail where you were lost had he so chosen."

Clarice's words recurred to Redmond's mind with irresistible force.

"By Jove! perhaps you are right, Pleydell. The soft-spoken villain!"

(To be Continued.)



[A PATHETIC APPEAL.]

THE MYSTERY OF HIS LOVE;

OR,

WHO MARRIED THEM?

By the Author of "Christine's Revenge; or,
O'Hara's Wife."

CHAPTER XXXII.

"DANGER HAS COME."

At war, at peace, or inter-quarrelling,
One against one, or two, or three, or all
Each several one against the other three.

MADemoiselle PATINI was in a state of the greatest excitement. Lilius could nowhere be found. There had been three dances after the supper, in neither of which, as we know, Lilius had joined, and mademoiselle had been radiant, cheerful and chatty all the time, for she believed that poor Edith's child was with the Countess of Penrythan. But when the dances were over and the guests began to depart, the poor old soul became uneasy.

She fluttered about like an elderly bird who has lost its nest full of young ones. She metaphorically flapped her wings. She asked everybody if they had seen mademoiselle, and when she received only evasive, preoccupied answers from ladies who were in a hurry and filled with anxiety about their carriages, their rugs, and their foot-warmers on that most inclement night (it was snowing heavily), or else anxious looks from gentlemen who had remarked the beauty of Lilius, and who thought it perhaps unbecoming that she should be "hiding away" with some, perhaps, worthless cavalier, mademoiselle grew seriously alarmed, and appealed to one of the upper servants, a grave man out of livery.

"My young friend, Mademoiselle Martin, left me some three hours ago to visit the Countess of Penrythan in her blue boudoir. Will you kindly go or send, and tell her that the carriage is ordered, and that Mademoiselle Patini is waiting?"

"But—certainly, madame, only here is the countess herself."

The man bowed his head, for at that moment, Grace, Countess of Penrythan, passed through the festooned, crimson velvet curtains which shut off one portion of the apartment from the other, and advanced to meet Mademoiselle Patini with a very anxious look upon her pale, sweet face. She bent her head gracefully to the little old maid.

"I am anxious at what I hear, madame," she said; "some of my servants tell me that you cannot find Mademoiselle Martin. I made an appointment with her, but she has not once been near the blue boudoir where I waited for her for more than an hour."

Mademoiselle Patini uttered a loud cry.

"She has been murdered!" she said, "in this hateful old chateau. Edith, Edith! you were mad to send her here."

Mademoiselle Patini here lost all control over herself. She beat her hands wildly together; she rocked herself to and fro as she sank upon an ottoman, and she cried out:

"It is the infamous master of this wicked old house who has done this. He knows that he is her father. More, that she is his only legitimate child, and he has made up his mind to destroy her."

"Madame!" said the countess, "you talk wildly. The earl, my husband, is ill with an attack of severe cold in the limbs, caused by a great wetting. He has not appeared among his guests to-night. He was only attacked yesterday, and that was too late to enable him to put his friends off. He has not stirred out of his arm-chair the whole of the evening."

"Ah! So you say," responded Miss Patini; "but I am not obliged to believe you. It is to your interest, of course, to get rid of the poor

beautiful child; but an investigation shall take place, of that be assured. Your rank and your wealth and your diamonds shall not save you from the clutch of the law."

"Who is that objectionable person, Simons, and why is she permitted to make all this disturbance in the chateau?"

The personage who made these pungent inquiries walked forth from a gilded door on the right, and putting her gold eye-glass to her eye, looked with a concentrated scorn on little old Mademoiselle Patini. Mademoiselle looked up and recognised the haughty Countess Dowager of Penrythan, that proud woman whose scorn of the unhappy Edith's claims had driven the young wife, who felt she was a wife, to desperation some eighteen years before.

An imposing and magnificent woman this countess dowager with her black velvet and her flashing jewels, her snowy hair, her still youthful complexion, and still strong likeness to that beautiful Marie Antoinette, Queen of the French. Mademoiselle Patini, small, wiry and excitable, seemed indeed an insignificant little person by her side. Nevertheless, the little old artist was full as consequential, if not as dignified in her manner of showing it; she was not one whit abashed, not one jot intimidated by the splendid countess mother.

Miss Patini was, we must say, an ardent republican; she respected neither long lines of ancestry nor sounding titles unless they were accompanied by excellent conduct, honesty, bravery, purity, charity. She had always had a dislike to the Dowager Countess of Penrythan from what she had heard of her. She turned round now upon her valiantly.

"This objectionable person, madame, is an old woman named Patini, who has supported herself for years, and has earned a competence by her own right hand. She is an artist in water-colours, and every year her pictures are hung in your English Academy. She is not the daughter, or the wife, or the mother of a nobleman. You are all those; but she does not honour you for one of those circumstances. As

for the question, "Why this objectionable person is now making a disturbance?" it is simply because she has lost a young lady in this house—a young lady who is the legitimate daughter of your son, the Earl of Penrythan."

"The Earl of Penrythan is my stepson," interrupted the dowager, with a cold smile. "No child of his has any legal claim upon me."

Mademoiselle was confused and taken aback for a moment. The fact that this proud woman was only the stepmother of the earl had been forgotten by her.

"No matter who you are," she said, roughly, at length, "the earl is the father of Lillias, the legal husband of her mother, and the girl is lost in this chateau among you. Oh, depend upon it she shall be found if the whole structure has to be destroyed by fire, sacked as the Bastille was sacked, don't doubt it." And Mademoiselle shook her fist.

The dowager smiled a cold and cruel smile.

"You are excited, madame. I must request you to leave the house at once. Show that person to the carriage."

She waved her hand as she spoke imperiously towards her servants. At that moment a fourth lady appeared on the scene. It was Lady Overbury. She had changed her ball-dress for a long dressing-gown of rich blue satin elaborately trimmed.

"I was in my dressing-room," she said, "and rumours of this very unpleasant disturbance reached me. I came here to say what I know of this affair. The girl has eloped with Pousard."

"With who?" shrieked mademoiselle.

"With the Chevalier Pousard," responded Lady Overbury, coolly. "He is the most arrant flirt. I regret now that I solicited Lady Penrythan to allow me to invite him, since he is, I know, a complete stranger to everyone here, save myself; but he really waits to such perfection, and I knew the man years ago. He has done my husband a service, but he has the assurance of a prince of the blood royal. He thinks it is only to come, to see, and to conquer, and girl after girl has been made an idiot of, this girl among others. What in the world he can have said to her to induce her to run away with him at once is more than I can understand."

"Traitor!" cried mademoiselle, turning round fiercely upon Lady Overbury. "You then are in the plot! You, then, hired one of your creatures as you did before to carry off Lillias. I will go and make a declaration before the police and the Juge d'Instructions, I will."

The Countess of Penrythan here interposed with uplifted finger. She was pale as ashes, but firm and calm.

"Mademoiselle," she said, "do not be violent, accuse nobody. We will send out and have this Pousard arrested on suspicion. Whoever he is, that we can do, and now while I feel it, allow me to intimate to Lady Overbury that in introducing a man of a questionable character into my house she has offered to me a very deadly insult, which, as a Christian, I must forgive, but which it will be difficult for me to forget."

"My dear, you are an angel!" cried Patini, "and I am sorry I spoke so hastily to you at first. Ah, tell me now, am I to go back to that poor mother and tell her that her child is lost? How is it possible for me to do that?"

And poor little old mademoiselle burst into a passionate flood of tears.

"It is not at all necessary that you should, mademoiselle. Remain this night in the chateau. I will send to Vernon and telegraph to Madame Donnetta that you are unavoidably detained here to-night. I will telegraph in your name, and I will also order the horses and carriage back into our stables, where they will be well seen to. Make yourself as easy as you can, mademoiselle, under the circumstances."

"But I can't make myself easy at all, Lady Penrythan," sobbed Patini. "Lillias was under my charge. Who would think of losing a young girl at a ball like this?"

"Nobody," scoffed Lady Overbury, "unless the girl had been a gutter child as this one was. She has gone back to her old associates again

—most natural, after all; but I will explain all this to the earl when I see him."

She darted a look of insulting malignity at the countess as she spoke, and she passed with a scoffing laugh out of the room. It was a long time before Mademoiselle Patini could be induced to take some refreshment in the luxurious and cosy little chamber that Lady Penrythan had had prepared for her. Here, reclining on a couch drawn close to a bright fire, she sobbed herself to sleep.

No search was made in the chateau, meanwhile, for poor Lillias. Everybody but Lady Overbury believed that she had quitted it. Mademoiselle felt almost sure she had been murdered. Grace, the countess, fancied that Pousard had under some pretence taken Lillias away with him simply because he was much infatuated by her glorious beauty, and that perhaps the poor child was somewhere with him an unwilling captive. Only Lady Overbury knew that Pousard was a clever, wicked woman in disguise, greedy for gain, and that Lillias was starving and suffering in a forgotten cellar under the Chateau Beauvois.

The Dowager Countess of Penrythan was in her own chamber, that is to say, the one appointed for her in the chateau that was now the winter residence of the earl, her stepson. She had hidden her lively and beautiful daughter, the former pupil of Edith Chantry, good night, and she had dismissed her maid.

It was very late; it was more than four o'clock, and one might have supposed that the dowager would have been glad to seek repose, but instead she sat up before her fire and looked into it as if she were reading her fortune there. Her fortune! A woman whose days were in the red and yellow leaf, notwithstanding her well-preserved complexion and still bright eyes. She was rich, widowed; she had two daughters both happily married; she had grandchildren; she had a stepson, to whom report said she had been very harsh in his boyhood, who honoured her and paid her the greatest respect in her declining years.

She was of sound health. The world was still to her as a pleasure garden, where she might gather any flowers she fancied. The golden harvest of her life was assuredly, so far as outward seeming went, already reaped and gathered into barns.

She must have had few, if any, sources of anxiety. There came a tap upon the door, imperious and loud. She started up. The coquetry of her youth had not yet deserted her. She glanced into a mirror set in a panel in the wall to see if her peignoir of blue satin and ruffles of white lace and becoming night coiffeur were all in order. Then she spoke the words "Come in," and there entered Lady Overbury. She closed the door without ceremony, locked it, crossed over to where the dowager sat, and then said in a low emphatic voice:

"The time of danger is come!"

"What do you mean?"

The countess asked the question in low tones, but with a blanched cheek and dilating eyes.

"I mean!"—Lady Overbury took her place quietly upon a low ottoman, and she laid her hand on the arm of the countess—"I mean that ghosts come back and haunt us all sooner or later if we have done murder! So the old superstition says!"

The countess was looking at the fire. "It really seemed as if she could not look the other woman in the face."

"So the old superstition says," repeated Laurette; "and it says true—quite true, for there is a ghost in Paris now walking the streets. I have seen it. Think of all the danger that implies. You see money even cannot avert what must come unless we take measures. For my part, Lady Penrythan, I have the courage of a lioness. I can plan anything and carry it out, but I am unwilling to suffer all the risk. You are in as much danger now, despite your wealth and position and serene crown of years, as I am in. Nothing could save you from the worst if the worst were

known. Those hands which princes have not dared to kiss while they were ungloved may yet wear the handcuffs, for after all the law is no respecter of persons!"

The dowager was a woman of nerve, but she shook like a leaf while the other spoke thus, and she gasped for breath and pointed to a cabinet.

"Bring me salvolatile," she panted, "I shall faint!"

But Laurette looked at her with cold, cruel eyes and did not stir.

"Those who have the courage for crime," she said, "should not lack the courage which is required to conceal it. If you are as firm as I am all may be saved!"

"Tell me how?" gasped the dowager.

Laurette leant forward and whispered into the lady's ear, and whatever that lady's crime had been, her courage failed her now. She fell fainting into the arms of Lady Overbury. That admirable woman laid her upon the floor, with a pillow under her head. She then dashed some cold water into the face of the dowager, and presently that lady opened her eyes and found the cruel eyes of Laurette fixed upon her.

"If I could die now," she said, "without pain and without shame."

"No, let us rather plan the death of others!" said Laurette, calmly. "For my part I do not know what nerves are; I do not know what conscience is. I never knew what it was to pity or to love anything or anybody in my life, therefore I am capable of anything, only I will not take all the risk. Listen to what I have to say!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

EDITH AT VERNON.

Who could hate such a steel, so fairly fair,
With angel pitying eyes and golden hair?

EDITH had not retired to rest. She knew the drive from Vernon was a long one, and that most likely the carriage would not start until three o'clock in the morning, probably, therefore, mademoiselle and Lillias would not arrive till five or even six o'clock.

"They will want breakfast when they return," she said.

So she kept up the fire and made, with the assistance of her maid, some excellent coffee, and there were also rolls, fresh butter and omelettes prepared for the old lady and the young one.

Edith and her maid sat up, each in an easy chair before the fire reading the papers, and now and then sleeping, to wake up shivering a little and inquiring about the time, and so the hours crept on until daylight broke. There had been a heavy fall of snow in the night, but now the sun shone as the sun can shine in Paris even in midwinter.

"It is eight o'clock," cried Edith, starting to her feet in terror, for she had counted while a clock struck—"it is eight o'clock. Something has happened—some accident! I cannot bear this suspense. We must hire a carriage and go to Vernon."

They had actually begun to put on their wraps when a telegram arrived. Edith tore it open and read as follows:

"UNAVOIDABLY detained. Will write full particulars. Sleep at the chateau to-night."

"Oh," said Edith, "there is something wrong. I must go to the chateau. What does Patini imagine that I am made of if she thinks I can wait? No, I must go. Thank heaven it is daylight. Go, my dear Suzette, and order a carriage at once. I will bathe my face and take some breakfast, so must you on your return, but I shall not change a thread in my attire, only we must wrap up well."

In less than half an hour they had started for the chateau of Beauvois. The roads were heavy with snow. They had a pair of horses, but it seemed to Edith that they would never reach the chateau, nor did they enter the

avenue of Beaubois until nearly one o'clock in the day. When the carriage drew up before the great entrance, Edith sprang out, went to the door and rang the bell. The door was opened; she stepped into the hall.

"I am come for Mademoiselle Martin," she said.

The man looked serious.

"Pardon, will madame see the countess?"

"Yes—on, I will see at once the Earl of Penrythan?"

"My lord is confined to his room. Nevertheless, since he has removed to the sofa, and since the business of madame is urgent, and if madame will send up her card?"

Edith hesitated.

"No, I must see the earl," she said, "at once, unless you can tell me where Miss Martin is. Has any accident happened? Answer me, for pity's sake."

"Only, madame, there has been, pardon me, an elopement!"

Edith rushed past the man into the grand hall, and she looked wildly about her.

"Do you mean that my—that Mademoiselle Martin has—"

"Yes, madame, that is so!" the French servant answered. "Mademoiselle and a Monsieur Pousard; most likely they will marry, madame!"

"But what are you talking of?"

In spite of the agonising suspense she was enduring, Edith felt a sense of great relief when she heard the word elopement. She had been thinking of fire and poison, of death in a hundred hideous shapes. Still, all was vague, mysterious and dreadful to her, even as it was.

"Show me to a room, please," she said, "and ask the countess if I may see her. There is my card. I am known as Donnetta, the opera singer!"

The French footman bowed. He had, as have most of his nation, a profound reverence for a successful artist. He showed Edith into a magnificent antique room, but she saw nothing. She walked up and down like a caged lioness.

"If anything has happened to my child in his house," she said to herself, "I shall say for ever and ever that he, and he alone, is to blame. Ah! the cruel wretch, how successful he has been!"

At that moment the door opened and there entered the Countess of Penrythan. She was as pale and agitated as Edith herself.

"Is this woman the love of his youth?" Grace asked herself. "More, is she in the sight of heaven his lawful wife? Is yonder magnificent, ebony-haired creature, with the voice of a seraph and the eyes of an avenging angel, the true Countess of Penrythan?"

And Edith said to herself:

"Yonder woman has the face of a holy saint purified by suffering. That robe of dark purple silk, and those ornaments of gold, are not the proper adornments of that form and that brow. No, she should be draped in white, with a scarlet cross on her breast. In her hands should be lilies, emblems of purity. What does she know of my child," and Edith advanced towards Grace with eagerness. "Tell me, where my child is, madame," she said—"my child—dearer to me than my life!"

"Heaven knows, I will do my best to find her, and to restore her to you," the countess answered, "but—"

Edith interrupted her almost fiercely.

"But," she said, "is there a but, an exception, a possibility that I may not find my child?—that she is lost, dead, murdered? Is my child murdered? If so, by whom—your husband? Oh, I must see him, Lady Penrythan!"

She locked her hands tightly into each other, her lips were blanched. Grace, the countess, flushed crimson to the roots of her hair. What a strange request was this, and to her. All her wifely feelings rose in arms against this proposal.

"It is unheard of, I think, madame, what you request; I mean under the circumstances—at least if I say that you may see my husband—I must claim the right to be present!"

"The right!" echoed Edith, with a strange

and dreary smile, and a peculiar far away look in her eyes, the meaning of which the countess could not fathom. "Yes, you have the right to forbid our speaking together, but," and now she looked full and fixedly at the countess, "you have no idea how wicked he has been to me eighteen long years ago. I wonder that I did not run mad and commit a crime!"

Edith looked terrible with her pale beauty and ebony hair at that moment. Grace was not a nervous woman, however. She held life, after all, too cheaply to be in much distress or fear when the thought crossed her mind that this beautiful rival, grown savage with wrongs, might have it in her mind to stab her to the heart. She calmly took a seat and pointed to another.

"You are much distressed," she said, with a sweet and compassionate smile. "I know too well what I should feel if I ever lost one of my own dear children. Let me order in wine?"

"No, I could not take it in his house!" cried Edith. And she added the next moment: "I am to be pitied, but you—oh, you—ten thousand times more!"

Grace looked at her rival in the greatest surprise.

"You mean," she said, gently, "that my husband loved my gold, not myself?—that his love was once yours, that he wronged you by a false marriage? I know all of that story; I know that you were wronged—at least, I believe that you were deceived. But after all, I am scarcely more to be pitied than you are, am I?"

She asked the question pointedly, and appeared to wait for an answer. Edith turned round, and her dark eyes seemed to read the stories in the glowing fire. They were filled with a strange gloom.

"He must love you now," she said, at length.

"No man, unless he were the coarsest and most stupid in the world—no man with an ounce of soul, a grain of mind in him, could live with you long years and not love you. Oh, you are to be pitied, for you love him also."

And then Edith wrung her hands and burst into tears.

"Her sorrows have crazed her," the countess said to herself. "Poor soul, would that I had good news to tell her of her child, who is most beautiful, and who is, I verily believe, the child of Alfred, my husband, for her likeness to the Penrythans is remarkable! Neither of the fair-haired daughters of the dowager, my husband's half sisters, have the dark eyes or Greek profile that that girl possesses. My own children resemble me; that girl is more like Alfred than are his half sisters or the daughters of our marriage. I am thinking of your daughter, Madame Donnetta," said the countess, kindly. "All I can learn is that she is supposed to have eloped with a certain Chevalier Pousard, a friend of Lady Overbury, but I believe the wretched man took her away on a false pretence, being fascinated with her superb beauty. He has not reappeared at the station at Vernon. He arrived there in the evening, and took a carriage to the chateau; he has not been seen since last night by a single individual to whom we have applied."

"Lady Overbury!" cried Edith, "has paid this man to lock up my child. She has done it once before, more than two years ago."

And she told the countess the story of the terrible time Lilius had passed in the penitentiary among thievish children.

"Then why did you not prosecute her?" cried the countess.

"Because I wished to hide both myself and my child from her at present for reasons. But it seems that she has found us out, and that I ought to have prosecuted her."

"We should forgive all; we should pray for all," said the good countess; "but, oh! that woman!" and she shuddered.

Edith turned round and faced the Countess of Penrythan.

"That woman is in your husband's confidence," she said, solemnly. "She knows his secrets—his darkest ones—and he is afraid of her. Oh! if I had my child again, I think I would give up the desire of my heart; I would

spare him for—your sake. You don't know, madame, how much I pity you, you have so good a face. Oh! let me see your husband; I am sure—quite sure—than I can persuade him to tell me where my child is."

"You shall see him," said the countess; "but I should be present at the interview. There ought not to be secrets between you and him which I do not share. Don't think I insult you by vulgar jealousy. No; only I feel for his sake, for my own dignity's sake; nay, for your sake, I ought to be present."

Edith paused a moment.

"Be it so," she said; "but I warn you, dear lady, that the interview will not be one calculated to calm your overwrought nerves. Oh, no; and yet put away from you all vulgar fears of such revenge as some women take. I am not a Russian lady with a dagger hidden up my sleeve. No; have me searched if you doubt me; but use despatch, and take me quickly to your husband, or bring him to me. I am impatient to look upon his face once more."

"The earl may object," said the countess. "I must ask him first."

"If you do," said Edith, "I fear that he will refuse to see me. Stay."

She took out her pocket-book; wrote in it rapidly; tore out two leaves, and handed them courteously to the countess.

"A thousand thanks, madame, if you will only hand your husband those leaves; and when he has read them, you will know whether or not he will condescend to see me. Read the words I have written, if you choose, madame."

Lady Penrythan read as follows:

"I wish to see you. I have a request to make. You had better not drive me away, for I am desperate. EDITH NÉE CHANTREY."

"To the Earl of Penrythan."

The countess bent her graceful head to Edith and walked out of the room, carrying the imperious and strangely-worded note between her fingers. She walked like one in a dream all up the broad, magnificent marble staircase. She went along a grand corridor, where ceiling and panelled wall represented the loves of Diana and Endymion painted exquisitely by some master of the French school; and so she reached the door of her husband's room. She knocked, as was always her custom.

"Come in," cried the musical voice of the earl. And the countess went in.

The earl, who had caught cold in his limbs, had been ill for some days through a severe wetting, being obliged to return at night to the chateau in his wet clothes in a carriage; but his vigorous constitution enabled him to throw off the effects of cold after a little careful nursing.

He stood now attired in a long silken dressing-gown in front of the fire; he was reading a French paper; he looked pale but singularly handsome; he glanced up at his sweet countess with a welcoming smile. Lewis, his confidential valet, was in the room sorting the rings and pins in his master's dressing-case.

"You can leave those things, Lewis," said the earl, impatiently, when he had glanced over the papers which Grace had given him.

"Pardon, my lord, those diamonds—"

"Leave them—leave them. The countess will put them right."

Lewis left the room. Grace, watching her husband's face, was horrified at its pallor. Her own heart beat fast.

"He loves her still; or once—once—he loved her with a passion he never gave to me."

And the pang that contracted her heart was as cruel as the thrust of a poisoned dagger.

"I wonder," he said, looking at his wife, "I wonder you listened to her."

"Do you know, Alfred, that she is the mother of the beautiful model who sold violets and sat for Holdsworth? She, this Donnetta, only found her child two years ago. She identified her by a certain dress which the girl showed her, and which was on the infant when the mother, in brain fever, abandoned it on the seashore at Penglaron. I have known all this some

time. Tell me, Alfred, who is that girl? Is she your child?"

"No! What am I saying? Grace! Grace! all men do rash and wicked things in youth. I—No; I cannot see this woman."

"Because you loved her so," said the countess, sadly; "because she was once so much more to you than I ever was; but I am not, I hope, morbidly jealous."

Poor Grace sighed.

"See poor Donnetta, Alfred; she is in such distress about her child whom she has lost. She says you can help her."

"Send her here. If I must see her I must, and get it over. And you, Grace, darling, stay with me; I cannot look that woman in the face. I used her ill. I was wicked to her. Place a shade over my eyes, so that I need not look at her. There is one; how lucky that my eyes have been a little weak lately. Now I will sit in this arm-chair. I will tell her that I am very—very—ill, and cannot be agitated. Now, Grace, darling, send her here, and let us have it over. It is all we can do."

The Countess of Penrythan looked in blank amazement at her lord. He had tied the green shade over his handsome eyes; he had thrown himself into an invalid chair, and he pointed impatiently to the door.

"Let her come here, and let us have it over," he said.

The Countess of Penrythan entered first, Edith followed. She looked round the splendid antique chamber, with its velvet furniture, walnut-wood carvings, and exquisitely-painted panels; and then her eyes rested on the bowed figure in the arm-chair. The countess, watching her, saw her lip curl in scorn.

"Ha! not a gleam of love in those dark eyes," said the countess to herself; "but how is it? He must have loved—she must have loved once."

The earl pointed courteously to a seat.

"Pray be seated, madame," he said, courteously.

Edith took a chair. She bowed her head slightly.

"My lord," she said, "I can read your heart."

"You are clever, madame," he said, with a nervous laugh, "for I can hardly read it myself. I am in wretched health just now, and suffering from weak eyes."

"So I perceive, my lord. But, my lord, I am come to tell you that your first love, Lady Overbury—she who knows the secrets of the past, she who has been your evil genius—has carried off my child—the Lady Lilius Anerly. Ah! for your sweet wife's sake I would spare you much. Only tell me, in the name of pity, where my child is and I will spare you half of what I was prepared to make you suffer."

"You speak in enigmas, madame."

Heaven! had these ever been lovers? Nay, more, husband and loving wife, in the years that were gone? Had he ever clasped Edith to his heart in the days of his hot youth, when he was a young soldier lord, maddened with the beauty of the portionless, orphan girl? And had she become his wife? Had they twain been one flesh? Was he the father of her child—of the beautiful, lost, innocent Lilius?

They met now with a half-mocking courtesy; they met with the cold phrases of the cold world on their lips; they met as strangers meet who have once been foes.

"You speak in enigmas, madame," said the earl.

"No, my lord, you know what I mean. Tell me, where is my child?"

"I swear by Heaven and earth, the throne and the footstool of the Infinite that I know not," said the earl, with solemn reverence, "and," he added, "if Lilius is our child, we have reason to be proud of her. Rely upon me, I will do the very best I can to find her, and I will provide for her handsomely. I behaved like a villain to you; I admit it."

"No!" said Edith, "you do not admit it. My good sir, listen to me, I am not deceived."

She crossed the room; she leant forward; she whispered into his ear, and the Earl of Penrythan fell forward, senseless, into the arms of the countess.

(To be Continued.)

THE KISS OF PEACE.

FISHWIVES and other market women have long enjoyed a reputation for truculence of speech and manner, not only in England, but in most parts of the world. A Russian colonel, who has lately been appointed chief police-master of one of the most populous towns of the Baltic provinces, has hit upon a very novel but truly Oriental plan for the civilisation of these irritable dames. He knew that preaching a moral homily would be of no use whatever where the hearers were two women who were cursing one another at the rate of a hundred words a minute, and who were only prevented from tearing one another's faces by the strong arm of the police.

"You must be locked up in one and the same cell until you have kissed each other."

This was invariably the sentence of the new magistrate in every case of female broil which was brought before him. He knew very well that although kissing one another is a habit with male Russians, it is not much in use with the women of Muscovy, least of all with the fishwives. The excited ladies were hurried off, railed for a time louder than ever, protested that they would die sooner than give this humiliating sign of reconciliation, and then, after a few hours' confinement, called the goaler, and informed him that they had "kissed."

As the conciliatory act was effected in the dark, for the sake of procuring liberty, and without the presence of witnesses, the fishwives were informed that they must repeat the kiss publicly in the open market place. A small fine was taken from each, and they were then marched out into the mercantile areopagus, and were then compelled, in the midst of their sisters in trade, to kiss each other three times, and to give a public promise of future peaceableness. At the end of six weeks, during which period this curious penalty was frequently imposed, not a single outbreak of a market wife battle occurred within the jurisdiction of the humorous police-master.

A LADIES' MAN.

It is a critical moment in the life and clothing of a man when he gets down on his knees to look under the sofa for a ball of zephyr which a lady friend has dropped. It is possible that he may be able to accomplish this and recover his perpendicular with nothing more serious than a red face and a general sense of having done something for which he should be sent out from the room. But in nine cases out of ten he never recovers the good opinion of himself that he possessed before he undertook the recovery of that ball. It is always just beyond his reach, and in a moment of weakness he drops down on his vest and commences to work himself under the sofa by a series of acrobatic feats that would have won him an encore on the stage. He is so intent upon the recovery of the ball that he quite forgets his appearance, until he is reminded by a suppressed titter from one of the ladies. Then he realises the position, and commences to back out.

Of course his coat is worked up over his head, and as he feels a cold streak creep up his back he pronounces a benediction on the man who invented an open-back shirt. He is also painfully conscious that about two inches of red flannel drawers are visible between the tops of his boots and the bottoms of his pants. This has the effect of producing more internal profanity, and still more violent struggles to back out, during which one suspender breaks, and his

collar-button comes out. When he finally delivers himself, and stands up in the middle of the room, you would not recognise in that red-faced, wild-eyed man standing there, holding his clothes together with one hand and trying to smooth down his hair with the other, the smiling, genteel ladies' man who stooped down to pick up that ball of zephyr a moment before.

CLARA LORRAINE;

—OR—

THE LUCKY TOKEN.

CHAPTER X.

"Ah," said Clara, a bright smile breaking over her face, and chasing away its sadness as she beheld Mr. Earnshaw, "I did not at first recognise you."

Mr. Earnshaw did not tell her that she had been known to him from the instant when she first spoke, neither did he tell her that at the sound of her voice his heart gave a quick throb of pleasure; for during the weeks intervening between their first meeting and the present moment he had vainly sought occasions to see her.

He did not immediately reply to her words, and a burning blush overspread Clara's face as she noticed that his glance fell upon her poor costume, and that he appeared to be taking note even of her worn gloves and unfashionable hat. It may be that a shade of sadness crossed the young girl's mind as she suspected that her standing in this man's eyes might be lowered by her plain appearance.

"Will you kindly permit me to look at your drawings?" he repeated.

Clara obediently laid them out for his inspection.

He took them up one by one, and fell to studying them until all had been duly considered.

"Humphreys," he then said, "it seems to me that you were a little hasty in your decision. There is great originality here, I think, and more ability than this young lady may suspect herself of possessing."

He took one of the sketches and pointed out certain portions which especially struck him.

"Don't you think that such taste, with proper direction, could be turned to account in your line?"

The other gentleman laid down the pen which he had resumed after concluding his interview with Clara, and looked at the sketch with closer interest.

"You know what the present demand is," continued Mr. Earnshaw, speaking in a low, confidential tone, and "original designs for book covers, artistic title-pages, initial letters, etc., are needing, and the ability here displayed might be turned in those channels."

"You may be right, Earnshaw," replied the one addressed, after a long inspection of the drawing. "You are more of an artist than I am, if it does seem to be in my line to be on the look out for such things, so if you advise giving the young lady a chance it shall be done."

"I don't think you could do better," was the confident reply.

Mr. Humphreys returned to the place where Clara stood, expectant, yet puzzled by this reconsideration of her work.

"This gentleman has given me a valuable hint," he said, "and if you are willing to avail yourself of it I think we may need your services. It is an easy matter for you to design?"

Clara modestly replied that she had never found any difficulty in anything of the kind which she had undertaken. Mr. Humphreys showed her several specimens of the kind of work to which he referred and explained the purposes for which such drawings were needed. The young girl quickly comprehended his

meaning and joyfully accepted the proposition which he made her.

"You may leave your portfolio with us," he said. "It may be necessary for us to show your work to the head of the establishment."

Clara willingly gave it to him, and having received certain other instructions which virtually amounted to a commission, she turned to thank the kind Mr. Earnshaw, who for a second time had so befriended her. But he met her assurances of obligation with a courtly denial.

"You overestimate my assistance," he said. "You possess undoubted artistic talent, Miss Lorraine, and I am sure the house of Dean, Tallmann and Co. should be glad to receive it. But tell me," he asked, changing the topic, "why is it that I have not seen you since our first accidental meeting? Have you been out of town?"

"Oh, no indeed," Clara responded. "The city and I are to be inseparable, I fancy, for some time to come."

"Are you still at Mr. Lorraine's? I have called there frequently of late, and yet I have never chanced to meet you."

Clara had too much pride to say that she was never invited to meet the guests of the house. She therefore only replied:

"I am much occupied, particularly in the evening, when callers usually visit the house."

Yet the truthful girl flushed as this sentence fell from her lips, and as if to confirm her integrity, and to remove the incredulous smile which she saw upon her companion's face, she added:

"I am indeed very busy, for it is only after my cousin Lina is safe in bed that I find any time for uninterrupted reading."

"Lina?" repeated Mr. Earnshaw. "That is the 'enfant terrible' whom I have occasionally seen at your uncle's, is it not?"

"Poor Lina will soon outgrow that title," replied Clara, smiling. "She has a warm little heart, and is really very apt and intelligent."

"You speak of the child as though you were her governess."

"I am such," returned the young girl. "Mrs. Lorraine desired me to undertake her education, and I am doing so to the best of my ability."

Again Mr. Earnshaw looked down upon the girl at his side with the same look he had once before bestowed upon her. Many thoughts were occupying him, some of which were conjectures and some convictions.

"Are you any more reconciled to your city life than you were when you first came?" he next asked.

"There is much which may be enjoyed here," she evasively answered.

"The opera, for instance," Mr. Earnshaw said. "Have you seen Kellogg?"

"Oh, the opera," cried Clara, drawing in her breath with a little catch at the mention of that undreamed-of pleasure. "I think I shall never go there!"

"Why not, pray?"

Again Clara was obliged to search for some discreet answer which would at once protect her truthfulness and save her the mortification of saying that her aunt neither desired nor would allow her company.

But her effort was a miserable failure. She could find no excuse of which her conscience could approve. So seeking to turn the subject, she mal-adroitly exclaimed:

"What lovely weather!"

Mr. Earnshaw burst into as hearty a laugh as his politeness would allow him to indulge in, but seeing by Clara's distressed face that she did not equally enjoy the situation, he checked himself as she turned to leave the office:

"Permit me, Miss Lorraine, to see you to your carriage."

"Ah, my carriage is such a long way off that you would not care to walk so far," she replied, regaining her composure and laughing gaily. "I always walk."

"Do you prefer walking, and is that the

reason why I never see you with Mrs. Lorraine and Miss Mabel in the Park?"

"No. I can't say that I do prefer walking," she honestly replied. "Riding in the park every day must be very delightful. I have never been there."

"Indeed! You surprise me, Miss Lorraine. If agreeable I should much enjoy taking you there some fine afternoon."

"Oh, no. You must not—indeed you must not," she hastily exclaimed, as the thought crossed her mind of the scene which would ensue in her uncle's family if this desirable parti should drive up to the door to take her, the despised orphan, out.

"Pardon me," she added, checking herself, "I am sincerely grateful to you, but I cannot accept your invitation."

Mr. Earnshaw looked puzzled.

"Do you mean that your aunt would object to your riding with a person upon so slight an acquaintance?" he asked. "It was inconsiderate in me to ask such a favour. If it would be more agreeable to you, I will include Mrs. Lorraine and your cousin in my invitation."

"Oh, sir, please do not think of such a thing as asking me!" returned Clara, with real alarm depicted upon her face. "Do not mention having met me, please, for if you should—"

She checked herself, ashamed that even by so much as this she had revealed the true state of affairs in her uncle's family.

Mr. Earnshaw said no more upon the subject, but walked by the young girl's side for some time in silence.

As he did so he looked down upon his companion from time to time and noted how quickly and how entirely the distressed look was banished from her face by the pleasurable interest which she took in surrounding objects.

The day was bright, the hour one at which the city was at its gayest; the shop windows were brilliant with holiday attractions, and deep in the girl's heart was the happy consciousness that the acquaintance, whose kindness had raised him to a sort of pedestal in her hero-loving heart, was not, after all, a bare observer of appearances, as she had a moment suspected him of being, else why did he choose to walk by the side of a shabbily clothed girl like herself in that crowded thoroughfare and at that fashionable hour?

Her steps involuntarily slackened as the two neared a florist's shop, where the vivid colours and the tropical luxuriance of the plants seemed to illumine the neighbourhood, while their sweet perfume pervaded the atmosphere even far outside the door.

"Oh!" the young girl delightedly exclaimed. "Was anything ever seen more beautiful? I thought when summer was gone one would need to wait for the sight of flowers such as those until the next season. See those lovely roses, those carnations, and those exquisite ferns. Pray, Mr. Earnshaw, are they real or artificial? But no, they are not artificial, for such perfume can only come from natural flowers."

Her companion drew her into the little shop, and for a while, in unrestrained delight, she feasted her eyes upon the floral array.

"Oh, these lilies!" she exclaimed. "My mother's favourite flowers!" and as she bent over them a tear dropped into one of the pearly chalices.

They turned to leave the place, after lingering some time longer, and as they left a goodly sized box was handed to Mr. Earnshaw. More than once, as they resumed their way, Clara turned her head to get a last, longing view of the flowers she loved so well.

They presently turned in the avenue leading to Mr. Lorraine's house, but when they reached the vicinity of his mansion Clara's flow of innocent gaiety was checked. Her successful errand, and thereby the hopeful future which seemed to smile upon her, her pleasant companionship, her charming walk, for the time banished from her mind the fact that she was tasting forbidden pleasures, but now, as she neared home, she suddenly remembered that direful consequences awaited her if, for a second time, she returned in Mr. Earnshaw's company.

She stopped short and looked up into his face troubled and perplexed.

"What is it?" he asked, smiling down upon her, with a friendly desire to aid her.

"It will be very rude, and very unkind in me to do it," she said, as if speaking to herself, "but I don't see what else is to be done."

"What rude and unkind thing are you planning?" he asked, pleasantly. "If I can help you I will, and then the rudeness and unkindness will rest on my shoulders."

She laughed at the notion, but her voice and face again put on their troubled look, as she replied:

"It is about yourself, Mr. Earnshaw. If you would not mind—that is, if you would just as soon—perhaps we had better say good-bye here."

"Ah, I see," he quickly replied. "It will make no difference in the world. 'I won't mind that if you won't mind carrying this package the rest of the way yourself.'"

He gave her the box he had got at the florist's and from which the delicate odour of tuberoses came forth.

"Oh, Mr. Earnshaw!" she exclaimed. "You make me more and more ashamed of my rudeness. But perhaps," she added, blushing painfully at the thought of her presumption, "perhaps you only wish me to take the package to my cousin Mabel."

"Nothing of the kind," he hastily answered. "It is for yourself, if you will accept it."

"She thanked him in a few gentle, heartfelt words, adding:

"And you must not go until I have thanked you again for the other favour you did for me this afternoon. Indeed, sir, you cannot know how great a favour it is," and her serious face and moistened eyes told, perhaps more eloquently than words could have done just how opportune it was.

"You think you can execute Mr. Hamphreys' commission without other instructions?" he asked.

"Oh, without difficulty," she joyfully answered. "I feel as though I could do anything, now I have been encouraged."

Mr. Earnshaw raised his hat, and as he bade her good-day, said, smilingly:

"Auf Glück!"

The wish for good-luck was answered by the young girl with the purest German accent, and with a smiling, happy face she bade him good-bye in the same language.

A moment later she ran into her uncle's house and sped to her room with the flowers, for she had a purpose in her mind concerning them.

"No one can withstand the happy influence of flowers," she said, as, throwing off her hat and cloak, she set herself to arranging her treasures.

With a deft hand she made five small bouquets, tying each one daintily with a bit of blue ribbon which she found among the resources of her work-box. The last bouquet was finished a few moments before six, and, gathering them up, she ran downstairs to the dining-room.

John was about announcing dinner, but the happy girl detained him until she had put a lovely knot of flowers on each napkin. The one she reserved for herself was the only inferior one of the five.

A few moments later the family took their places around the board, and Clara, who thought the flowers were as rare in the sight of others as in her own, looked with pleased excitement to see how her gifts would be received. Mrs. Lorraine took her bunch in her hand, held it to her nose for a moment, and then handed it to the servant behind her chair.

"Take these away, John," she said. "Tuberoses always make me ill; they are out of taste, except at funerals."

Mabel, on the contrary, was honestly pleased—as much, perhaps, because she needed a bouquet for her corsage as because of the flowers themselves.

"Ah! what exquisite carnations!" she cried,

holding them up and looking about the table. "Where did they come from?"

Clara, pleased that by one of the family at least her gift had been appreciated, was silent; but Lina spoke up quickly:

"I knew," she said. "I bet I know, but I won't tell."

Then attracting Clara's attention by hitting her with her foot under the table, she asked, in a loud whisper:

"Wasn't they in that box that somebody gave you down by the corner of Regent Street? You needn't be afraid of my telling," she added, as Clara's face flushed crimson. "I won't. You and I'll keep it for our own secret," and looking at the rest of the family with great self-importance, Lina threw out her chin, and nodded her head back and forth.

"Such flowers at this season of the year are very costly," remarked Mrs. Lorraine, significantly. "I think, Alfred, you had better look a little closer after your niece's movements."

Clara ate her dinner in silence, striving to command herself sufficiently to accept this disappointment as stoically as she had many others of greater moment; and she succeeded so far as to be able to endure unflinchingly the suspicious glances which from time to time her relatives, with the exception of Lina, directed towards her.

Mr. Earnshaw, when he took leave of Clara Lorraine, rapidly retraced his steps down Regent Street, and again entered the florist's shop.

He went to the spot where the lilies were placed, and looking among them selected one in which a young girl's tear had been dropped a short time before. This he bore away with him, not stopping to take the change which the astonished shop-girl offered him.

"Yes, there is such a young person in my family—in my employ, rather," Mrs. Lorraine said one evening, not long after the meeting just related.

The question which called forth this remark was propounded by Robert Earnshaw as the two were talking in the recess of a window at a large party given by one of Mrs. Lorraine's friends.

The managing woman had expected that sooner or later such a question would be directly asked, for she had noted the young man's manner when, during evening visits at her house, he had turned expectant glances toward the door whenever it was opened, as if he watched for the entrance of another person.

"The young lady to whom I allude," said Earnshaw, determined to follow up his opening question, "is a relative of your family, is she not?"

Mrs. Lorraine smiled.

"The poor thing claims, and I will do her the justice to say, fancies, there is a sort of relationship. Her name is indeed the same, but beyond that coincidence the connection is so slight the least expert genealogist could hardly trace it. Why do you inquire about her?" demanded the lady in her turn, affecting a careless, innocent tone. "Have you ever met her?"

"I have had that privilege upon one or two occasions, and must say she has interested me. She seems quite different from the young ladies one meets with now-a-days."

Mrs. Lorraine flushed as she remembered her own daughter; but she laughed as she replied:

"Upon my word, Mr. Earnshaw, you speak of my nursery governess as though she were moving in the best society of the city."

"I see no reason why she should not do so," returned the young man. "She seems to possess every qualification of mind, person and manner. Indeed, I think our so-called 'higher circles' would be graced by her presence."

Mrs. Lorraine bit her lips, for an angry retort was well nigh spoken; but she checked herself in time, and said craftily:

"Yes, Clara is indeed very pleasing in her appearance. She has a pretty pink and white

face, and her voice is one which may attract; but, unfortunately, she has a disposition which does not harmonise with her agreeable exterior."

"Indeed!" ejaculated her auditor. "One would not suppose her to be either sullen or high-tempered."

Again the lady smiled significantly.

"One should never form a decided opinion of a person's character without some knowledge of her home life," she sententiously said. "When Clara first came to us I judged her as you have done. I was exceedingly attracted by her pleasant face and manner, but before long I had grave reason to reflect, and to correct my hasty judgment."

Mrs. Lorraine paused to let her words sink into the young man's mind, and, not to appear too eager in traducing another, she made a feint of changing the conversation.

But Mr. Earnshaw prevented her.

"Is the young lady an orphan?" he asked.

"Yes; her mother died recently. My heart yearned towards the bereaved girl when I heard of her forlorn, penniless condition, and I would gladly have done the same for her as for my own dear daughters; but Clara seems to prefer other society to that of my own family, and of late I have allowed her to take her own course. I could not, indeed, do otherwise, for with her other peculiarities she is exceedingly self-willed."

Mr. Earnshaw's eyes sought the floor, and Mrs. Lorraine, from beneath her long, handsome eyelashes, flashed toward him a glance of observation.

"Evidently," she thought, "he has been deeply impressed, and my warning words come none too soon."

"You told me, I think," the gentleman presently said, looking up, "that Miss Lorraine was your governess?"

"Yes; my nursery governess. Lina is backward in her studies, else Clara would not be a fit instructress for her."

Mr. Earnshaw remembered the correct German he had once heard from the nursery governess's lips; but not mentioning that circumstance to his companion, he said:

"Are you not afraid that the guidance and example of one whose disposition is so unpleasant may have an injurious effect upon your little daughter?"

Mrs. Lorraine looked quickly up at her questioner, for so well managed was his tone she could not tell whether he asked the question as she would have him or whether there was a sarcastic meaning beneath his words.

She decided that the query was innocently put, and replied:

"Do not fancy that I trust Lina to her entire charge. Her influence is indeed very slight, as the recitations all take place in my presence, and I shall never permit any intimacy between the two."

"Does she remain with you long?"

"The poor girl has no other home," sighed Mrs. Lorraine, "and I cannot reconcile it to my conscience to send her away. Indeed, were I inclined to do so, I think my dear Mabel's tender conscience would lead her to cry out against it."

"Certainly," said Mr. Earnshaw, "without doubt Miss Mabel's sympathies would be enlisted in behalf of one so near her own age."

"Yes, indeed!" exclaimed the scheming mother. "I never dared speak of the thing but once in her presence, and that was when some instance of Clara's fearful temper was fresh in my mind. I think I never saw Mabel so excited, for to her imagination it seemed as though the almshouse would be Clara's only refuge—quite forgetting, of course, that I should have made some suitable provision for the girl."

Mr. Earnshaw looked toward a distant part of the drawing-room and let his eye rest for a moment on the young lady whose tender-hearted praises he had just listened to.

She was whirling through the mazes of the dance with Mr. Langton, and a quick look around the apartment told him that the mutual devotion of the pair was a subject of comment to those around.

He shuddered as he thought of Mr. Langton's true character, and he would then and there have warned Mrs. Lorraine of her daughter's dangerous infatuation if he had not already known something of the state of affairs in that family circle.

Meanwhile the lady went on in her alternate praises and vilifications, to all of which her auditor gave an attentive ear, but committed himself by no assenting response.

CHAPTER XI.

THE same evening Mr. Lorraine, who had accompanied his wife and daughter, was far differently employed, though, strangely enough, the absent Clara was also the subject of his thought.

The crowded rooms, the heavy, flower-perfumed atmosphere, forced him away from the parlours, and seeking a retired apartment nearly deserted by those who found the dancing-rooms more attractive, he was about seating himself in a cool corner, where a group of gentlemen friends were discussing some political manoeuvre, when his eye fell upon a middle-aged gentleman standing in another part of the room.

Mr. Lorraine looked twice before he could fully persuade himself that his eyes had not deceived him; a second glance convinced him that they had not played him false, and, though he secretly wished they had done so, he crossed the room with a rapid step and cordially extended his hand.

"Upon my word, Wardlaw," he said, "this is a happy meeting! From what planet have you dropped so suddenly?"

"From no more distant planet than China," replied the other gentleman, taking Mr. Lorraine's outstretched hand and returning the pressure with courteous gravity.

"When did you arrive?"

"Only yesterday, and you see I appear to be in haste to dip into society again; but to tell the truth, I thought I should meet some old friends here."

"Let me hope that your expectations have been realised, and that old friends have been found in abundance."

The gentleman addressed as Wardlaw shook his head.

"I fear old friends, like old times, can never be re-called," he said. "London society has greatly changed in the last twenty years, for, with the exception of yourself, I have seen only one other familiar face. I sadly miss your brother Arthur's handsome countenance."

Mr. Lorraine passed his hand across his forehead in the way which was common to him when troubled or anxious.

"Yes," he returned, "my poor brother was sadly missed; but as you say, the number who once knew him is fast diminishing."

"He left a wife and child, did he not?"

"Yes."

"Are they living?"

"The wife died a short time since."

"And the child? It was a daughter, if I remember aright. Where is she?"

"She is with me."

Mr. Wardlaw's face brightened as he said: "Ah, I am truly glad to hear that! I must see Arthur's child. I shall do myself the honour of calling upon her. She was left a great heiress, was she not?"

"Oh, no," returned Mr. Lorraine. "Did you not hear that my brother was very unfortunate in his speculations and that he lost everything?"

"Lost everything?" repeated Mr. Wardlaw. "How was the thing possible? His fortune was so large that he must have fairly thrown it away, for, as I remember Arthur Lorraine, he was not given to speculation."

"It's the old story," replied the other. "He fell into the hands of sharpers, and, as you say, not being familiar with the ways of speculators, was an easy victim. It was a crash, you may be sure, but Arthur took it stoically."

"Was he married at the time?"

"He married shortly afterward," said Mr. Lorraine, coughing behind his hand.

"Oh, I see how it was," returned Mr. Wardlaw. "I remember Elsie Warren. She loved Arthur for herself, and when the crash came she clung to him just the same and married him. Is it not so?"

Mr. Lorraine nodded, and replied:

"It was a sad business all the way through. Arthur had never been bred to business habits, you know. So, after his failure, he went into the country and settled down to a quiet hum-drum life."

"Did he never return to the city?"

"Never."

"Did he seem happy after the change in his circumstances?"

Again Mr. Lorraine coughed behind his hand.

"I really cannot tell you," he said, "for unfortunately my poor brother and I were not on very friendly terms during the latter part of his lifetime. The change in his circumstances made him suspicious, and his fancies took such a strange turn that, in justice to myself, I did not seek any interviews with him. I would have been most willing to have assisted him and to have helped him to a fresh start, but his behaviour towards me was such that I could find no opportunity to make him the offer."

"Humph!" said Mr. Wardlaw, "it would have seemed a strange thing for Arthur Lorraine to receive assistance from his younger brother."

The words were not intended to be heard, but the other gentleman caught their meaning, nevertheless, and he drew himself up as if to resent some implied disparagement, but the other proceeded:

"You say Arthur's daughter is with you. How old may she be?"

"Sixteen or seventeen, I fancy."

"Does she resemble either father or mother?"

"Both, I think."

"Then she must possess exceeding beauty. She is with you this evening, I presume. Will you introduce me to her?"

"She is not with us," replied Mr. Lorraine, constrainedly. "In fact, she seldom goes out. My wife thinks her still too young, and Clara herself prefers the quiet of home."

"That's strange in a young and pretty girl," said Mr. Wardlaw, bluntly. "I shall call and see her at an early day," he added, "for Arthur's daughter must be my friend. Her father and I, you remember, were the Damon and Pythias of our time."

Mr. Lorraine nodded and politely seconded the invitation of his acquaintance, after which the conversation turned into other channels—to the foreign life of the one, and the vicissitudes in the life of the other, and the changes which had taken place in the native land of both during the long absence of the former.

When the two separated Mr. Lorraine looked anxiously after his acquaintance. In the middle-aged gentleman so unexpectedly encountered that evening, he saw the early and inseparable friend of his elder brother, one upon whose sound judgment and acute ability that brother had implicitly relied in years gone by.

There had been little love or friendship between Mr. Wardlaw and the younger brother, and the latter, looking upon the long absence of his brother's friend as a proof of his death, had almost forgotten his existence, when he suddenly stood before him as if he had risen from the grave.

One remark which Mr. Wardlaw had made sounded again and again in Alfred Lorraine's ears:

"If I had been here he would not have lost his all," and this remark haunted him who heard it all the more persistently, for he knew it was true.

Going back to the crowded drawing-rooms with the intention of taking leave of his hostess, Mr. Wardlaw was forced to stand still for some moments until a figure in a dance was completed.

Near him, close at his elbow, was a lady of

striking beauty and a young man whose appearance attracted the elder gentleman's favourable notice.

Standing in such close proximity he could not but overhear their conversation; and as it was carried on without any attempt at concealment, he made no effort to extricate himself from the knot of people among whom he was wedged.

Presently the name of Clara Lorraine fell upon his ear. He listened and followed the course of the conversation to its close. A few moments afterward he begged of a gentleman near the favour of being told the name of the handsome lady who had just moved away from their vicinity.

"Do you not know the elegant Mrs. Alfred Lorraine?" was the reply. "She is the most beautiful as well as the most accomplished lady of fashion whom London has ever known."

"And the gentleman with whom she was conversing—will you kindly mention his name also?"

"Earnshaw; decidedly the finest young fellow in town. It is whispered that Mrs. Lorraine would like to secure him for her eldest daughter; but I'm afraid her efforts will be thrown away, for the young lady herself seems to have other preferences."

Mr. Wardlaw thanked his informant, and shortly thereafter left the house; but as he was passing through the hall on his way to the street door, he again saw Mrs. Lorraine standing in the centre of an admiring circle.

Her eye rested upon him with an approving glance, for tall, distinguished and stately, he might have been singled out from among a thousand as a person of note.

The vain desire to attach him to her train of admirers seized the frivolous woman, and turning to her husband, who at that moment approached, she desired to be told his name.

Mr. Lorraine did not reply, and his wife, looking at him more narrowly, observed that he looked worn and ill.

"Let us go!" he said, impatiently. "I've had more than enough of this for one night."

Mrs. Lorraine willingly enough acceded, but the infatuated Mabel begged hard for an hour's delay. She had promised Langton one more waltz, and she was determined he should have it. But her father's stern command could not be disobeyed, and pouting with ill-humour, she was torn from the scene of festivity.

"Eugenia," said Mr. Lorraine, when he and his wife were alone that night, "something must be done about Clara."

"Very well," she returned. "I am exceedingly glad that at length you begin to see that something must be done. I have advocated it from the beginning, and now it seems you have come around to my way of thinking."

"My way of thinking may not exactly coincide with yours," was the reply. "Something occurred this evening which convinces me it would be best to make a little more of her—to take her into society, and so on."

Mrs. Lorraine held up her hands, and almost shrieked.

"Take Clara into society with us! Are your senses leaving you, Mr. Lorraine? Think of Mabel, of our plans respecting her; think, too, of the mortification of being burdened with an ignorant country girl like Clara. Let me tell you at once, Alfred, it cannot be done! Don't ask it of me, for I shall have to give you a point blank refusal."

Mr. Lorraine listened until his wife had finished, a stormy cloud gathering on his brow. "Eugenia," he said, "you and I once had an unpleasant conversation on this very subject. Let us not repeat it. I tell you once more, Clara must go into society."

"Then she shall go alone!" exclaimed Mrs. Lorraine.

"She will not go alone, for I shall accompany her," returned her husband, steadily. "She must also be seen out with the family when you and Mabel ride in the Park or elsewhere."

"Not with me, Alfred. Clara Lorraine shall never set her plebeian foot in my carriage!"

"Then she shall have a far handsomer one of her own! She must also dress more suitably."

I have already twice given Mabel money to get her proper clothing, but I am convinced Mabel has spent it upon herself. Therefore, I wish you to buy for her the richest costumes money can procure."

"I will never do it, Alfred."

"Then I shall apply to your friend, Mrs. Grahame, and beg her to do this favour for me."

Mrs. Lorraine, transported beyond the limits of speech by her anger, burst into tears.

"Alfred," she cried, between her passionate sobs, "if you execute your threats, I shall sue for a divorce!"

"You may do so," he firmly replied. "Your future, as well as my own, depends upon your obeying me. From to-night Clara must hold a different position in this house. She must have a different room—Mabel's if no better one can be found. She must also have a servant of her own, and everything which money can buy."

Mrs. Lorraine dried her eyes, and looked at her husband, in doubt as to his sanity. Either her own senses had forsaken her, or her husband's reason had fled. She forbore further opposition, and retired, determined neither to accede to his requests then or at any future time.

(To be Continued.)

CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER CASES.

ZEB CUTLER came into the village post-office the other day in a towering passion. He was literally boiling over with wrath.

"Where is the man?" he demanded, furiously. "Where is he? Show him to me?" And he turned up the cuffs of his coat-sleeves, and spit upon his hands. "I want to see the man!"

"What is it, Zebulon?" asked a bystander. "What is it! I should say it was enough! Somebody said 'at my father didn't know as much as old Squills's poodle dog! Where's Sam Carter?'"

"Here he comes."

"Ho!—Yes. Them words was spoken to him. —Say!—Sam!—Will you jest tell me who it was 'at told you 'at my father didn't know so much as old Squills's poodle dog?" And in Zeb's flashing eyes and clenched fists lurked destruction dire and dreadful.

"Sartin'," said Sam. "It was Tom Waterford. Aye—and here he comes."

At that moment Tom Waterford entered the office—a youthful Hercules, standing six feet in his stockings, and built like a Zulu chief. Zeb looked at him and gasped. But he had gone too far in the presence of the assembly to back down now; so, with a bold front, though a close observer could have detected a paleness of the lips, he went up to the new-comer and demanded:

"Tom Waterford, did you say 'at my father didn't know so much as old Squills's poodle dog?"

"No, Zeb," returned Tom, with a broad grin. "You've got it mixed. What I said was this: I said that old Squills's poodle dog knew more'n your father knew!"

"Ah—O!—Aha!—that makes a difference. I swan, Tom! I'm glad you didn't say it that other way, 'cause 'F'n had, by Jimminy! I should 'a been mad!"

COMMANDER CHEYNE'S scheme for reaching the North Pole in a balloon goes on merrily. He says that forty-nine branch committees have been already established in various parts of the country, and that several high naval and other authorities heartily approve of his plans. There is no doubt that the Admiralty will do all it can to help him, provided he can raise his proposed fund of £30,000, about which he has himself no misgivings. His proposal is, as all are doubtless aware, to go as far as he can in ships and then endeavour to reach the Pole in balloons.



[THE ACCUSATION.]

A WOMAN'S HATRED.

THE clocks had all chimed the hour of midnight, and the city was still. As dreams upon the people, so fell the black shadows in the long, deserted streets. The quiet was not broken by the ringing of the steel of the assassin, but murder was being done. The stars looked calmly down, and saw unholy mirth, horrible revelry, despair, and long between whiles the sleep of the innocent.

Such was the sleep of Bertha Graylum. Her chamber was one of a handsome suite in the elegant residence of the rich Widow Westerly, and Bertha was an orphan niece who had been taken into the family five years before the opening of this story. A shaded lamp burned dimly, showing a trunk which stood near, with one or two packages on top, as if it had been placed there the last thing before retiring. Over a chair at the foot of the bed a grey travelling-dress was carefully placed, as if to shield it from crease or wrinkles.

It did not appear to be the same light now which Bertha had brought up; there was another which was apparently just brought in. Soft footsteps had moved through the darkened chamber; there had been a smothered cry, and quick, frightened movements. At the door appeared a beautiful but haggard face, looking in, oh! so cautiously. The hair was caught up with a comb, but the locks, half curling, still

hung down the neck. The eyes, distended, were fastened on the bed where Bertha slept. Then cautiously she advanced; quietly she detached a key from the few trifles with which it was placed, and kneeling down she opened the trunk.

She then cut the lining, and between that and the trunk she thrust some bank notes and a necklace. She then fixed the things again and closed the lid. But she had not yet finished. She caught the travelling-dress, and into the pocket she dropped a diamond ring, then turned and hurried from the place to her own couch—but not to sleep.

"My love, how pale you look!" exclaimed Mrs. Westerly, the next morning, as Belle entered the breakfast-room.

"No wonder, mamma! The loss of my chain and ring wears upon me so that I can hardly sleep. I am glad that we sent the officer for a warrant, as I intend to have every nook and corner searched, and every trunk in the house," she added, with emphasis.

"Not mine, I hope," said Bertha, lightly, looking very pure and delicate in her well-fitting travelling-dress.

"I shall have somebody's trunk searched in whose possession I saw my diamond ring and a ten-pound banknote last night," returned Belle, her voice slightly shaking.

"Oh heavens!" exclaimed Mrs. Westerly, suddenly putting her hand in her pocket. "It is not here—a hundred pounds—why! are we surrounded by thieves?"

"Perhaps Bertha can account for at least the banknote," replied Belle, steadying her voice with a great effort.

Bertha spoke not, but, stunned at the accusation, stood looking from one to the other.

"I did not intend to spy on you, Bertha, but I saw you last night examining my costly diamond ring and—a banknote," said Belle. "But of course you have no objection to our seeing the inside of your pocket?"

"Oh, Belle! I have forgiven insult on insult, but I cannot forgive this! Me! me! with your diamond ring?"

"Bertha, empty your pocket," said Mrs. Westerly, firmly. "Of course, if you are innocent, there will be nothing there."

"If I—am—innocent!" gasped Bertha. "Oh, Mrs. Westerly, have you the courage to outrage a poor orphan girl? No—put your hand in—I'll not resist you."

Mrs. Westerly immediately emptied the pocket of the poor orphan girl, and out rolled the ring and banknote.

"Why, Bertha, you wicked girl! Why, Bertha Graylum, you a thief!"

A slight shriek burst from Bertha.

"Aunt Westerly and Belle," she said, "as Heaven is my witness, I never touched that ring—I never had it in my hands! This is some cruel dream—me!—me!"

"Please'm, an officer be here!" said a servant, and Mrs. Westerly and Belle left the room.

"Bertha," said Mrs. Westerly, again appearing in the door. "Where is the key of your trunk?"

"I left it on the table," said Bertha; and becoming indignant, she continued, "Aunt Westerly, how can you—how dare you—suspect me?"

But Mrs. Westerly was gone, and Bertha was alone. Let us not dwell on the finding of the money and necklace in the trunk.

"You may get a warrant and take her to gaol," exclaimed Mrs. Westerly. And with that she and Belle left the poor girl with the officer who took her to gaol.

"Please'm, a gentleman be in the hall and won't go till he sees you. I told him you wasn't home, but he said he'd wait," said the servant.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Westerly. "I wonder who can it be, Belle? But show him in."

The young man entered, and after bowing coldly to the ladies, he said:

"I am Tom Latimer, Bertha Graylum's cousin. We received your note telling us of her disgrace, and I am here to have it fully explained."

Well, there is nothing to tell, only that your cousin stole a hundred pounds, beside a diamond ring and necklace, and we of course were compelled to—

"Stop, for heaven's sake! Bertha Graylum a thief! Repeat her name calmly, and see if you can couple it with theft."

"Well, she will have a chance of clearing herself," said Mrs. Westerly. "But I tell you that I think Bertha Graylum is a—"

"Silence!" roared Tom. "I tell you I will not hear her called a thief! You know in your heart that it is false. And you, Miss Belle; have you no compassion for a poor orphan girl whom you have tried to ruin?"

"Oh, I wish she had never come here!" exclaimed Mrs. Westerly.

"So, most devoutly, do I! It would have saved a foul sin somewhere," said Tom, breathing hard. "I see, too," he added, "that there's a ship been spoken near here, and if the man that was to marry her comes to the rescue, as he will, he'll leave no stone unturned, I warrant you."

Belle started as if stung, when he said this, and her face grew yet more ashy. Mrs. Westerly raised her head and asked:

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that my sister Linda has been the confidant of Bertha; that Bertha told her that she was to be married to De Witt Gildersleeve in the fall, and that she was to get her wedding outfit then."

Belle was deathly white, but Mrs. Westerly exclaimed:

"Absurd, Mr. Latimer, absurd! Why, Mr. Gildersleeve is a particular friend of my daughter's. He had been coming to this house years before Bertha ever saw him. 'Well,' she added, with a faint laugh, 'that is as cunning a thing as she has done yet.'"

"I will not hear my cousin's name coupled with artifice," said Tom, his brow growing dark again. "When Bertha said that he was to marry her, she told the truth, and I am going to wait until he returns; we will find out who is guilty." And without looking at them, he left the house.

"Why, Belle, is not that absurd? She going to marry Mr. Gildersleeve!"

"I'm tired of the whole affair," exclaimed Belle, pettishly.

"But if Mr. Gildersleeve should stand in this relation to Bertha, it looks serious."

A smothered cry was Belle's only answer.

"You know you saw the whole affair just as well as I did."

"I know it."

"Well, you will have to go into court and testify. We will clear Bertha."

"I want to clear Miss Bertha as well as you do, but I don't want to go into court; besides, it seems mean to inform against Miss Belle."

The speakers were Louise, Belle's dressing-maid, and Carrie, a sort of go-between.

"Why, you foolish thing! Don't want to inform against Miss Belle, when you know what a wicked act she did! At any rate, you will have to tell, for I will tell against you!"

"But why didn't you tell on Miss Belle that morning?"

"I couldn't; I should have been turned out of my place; and it was better to wait till the trial. Miss Bertha is happier than Miss Belle. But there's her bell. Remember!"

Go back now, reader, a period of some twenty days.

Our scene changes to the wide expanse of waters, and a solitary ship ploughing her way from billow to billow.

It was nearing twilight. The blush of the sun was touching the tops of the waters for the last time; it lingered yet in mid-sky, crimsoning its swelling sails. The two men were standing at the bow, viewing the distant clouds. One of them was the young commander, De Witt Gildersleeve; the other a passenger, an old and somewhat weather-beaten man, who came on board just as the vessel was getting under way.

"It is well worth an ocean voyage to see sights like that," said De Witt, raising his hat and allowing the breeze to lift the brown curls from the temples.

"Ah, indeed it is! I have seen many like this in these same waters," replied the elder man. "But for the finest sunsets in the world, give me Australia. You have never been to Australia yet?"

"Never; my calling has taken me hitherto only as far as America," replied De Witt.

For some moments the stranger was silent, plunged in deep meditation, then he said:

"Have you heard of the gold discovered in Australia?"

De Witt replied that he had.

"Well, I was one of the first to find the rich veins cropping out here and there in the valley and along the river sides. And now I am going home to a daughter I left in the old country. If I find her living, and in the same good hands to which I entrusted her, I shall leave with her that which will render her independent. Ah, what hopes and fears agitate my breast by turns, when I think of the chances of meeting my child! Alas, she may be no more!"

"What is it, Antonio? Do you wish to speak to me?" said De Witt, to an old sailor who was near, and who had for some time been standing awkwardly twisting his queer-looking hat and glancing toward De Witt, who did not for some moments observe him.

"If you please, sir, I would like to say something to the other gentleman."

"Certainly; come this way. Captain Wakefield, this good sailor taught me what a Christian was; many's the time he has prayed for me."

"I always pray for somebody," said the sailor, his tawny face glowing at the praise. "But, sir—captain—I know you; do you remember me?"

"I cannot say I remember you, my friend," said the tall, grave old gentleman.

"You remember when the boy fell from the yard? You was Captain Graylum then; I do not forget you."

"Antonio!" exclaimed the old gentleman, grasping the sailor's hand. "I remember you now. Yes, you saved the life of my darling nephew."

"Sir, did I hear the name of Graylum?" said De Witt, interrupting him.

"That is my name, though I have gone by my given name since I was in Australia. My whole name is Henry Wakefield Graylum."

"And—you spoke of a child—a daughter," said De Witt. "May I ask if her name is Bertha?"

"The same, my friend," exclaimed the other, turning eagerly. "You know her, then—my precious child?"

"I know a Miss Bertha Graylum. She stays, or was staying, with a family by the name of Westerly."

"Yes, you have seen my child! Tell me, how is she? Did she ever speak of me—my dear child?"

"Come with me, if you please," said De Witt. "You may go now, Antonio."

They proceeded to the young commander's room. He opened a drawer, and took from it a miniature of Bertha, and handed it to the captain.

"Is this my Bertha? Can it be possible my little girl is so beautiful?" said Captain Graylum, putting the face to his lips; and then looking up he said, "you knew her well, then? You—"

He paused.

"I love her, sir," replied De Witt, modestly, "and if it is God's wish and yours she will be my wife when I return."

"I could not wish a better fortune for my child," said the old captain, his lips and hands trembling as he spoke. "Oh, sir," he added, "is the dear child a Christian?"

"She is in every way lovely," replied De Witt, and silently left the captain to his own joy.

The ship was neither detained by contrary winds nor deterred by calms; the sun seemed to shine on the whole voyage. The next morning was a glorious one. The "Flying Cloud" had gone up at night and was now warping in to her berth. As it touched the dock, a young man jumped on and pressed forward to De Witt.

"Why, Tom, how are you?" said De Witt, grasping him warmly by the hand. "But I forgot; I have brought home your uncle, the father of Bertha. Capt. Graylum, Mr. Tom Latimer."

"Tom, Tom!" cried the old gentleman, holding him at arm's length. "Well, this beats all! A great man with a beard! But Bertha—have you heard from her lately? Why do you turn away? Is she well? Is she—"

"No—well and—happy," murmured Tom, almost choking.

"For heaven's sake, Tom, whatever it is, tell me!" said De Witt. "Has she gone away? Is she married, ill, or dead?"

His lips were white as he spoke.

"She is well, but—but—she has been sadly betrayed; in fact, she is in the gaol yonder! Yes, De Witt, it is false, but it will all come out right. Keep calm, De Witt. I'll stand by to the extent of my fortune. It's a black falsehood

from beginning to end—keep calm, keep calm!" added Tom.

He might as well have spoken to marble; he neither raved nor moved; but the old man bent his grey head in his hands and groaned:

"Oh, my child!—my Bertha!"

"In the gaol yonder, did you say?" at last De Witt slowly articulated. "It is simply false!" And he drew his lips firmly together. "Strange," he added, with a bitter laugh. "Pray when did you first become aware of this wonderful hallucination?"

"I don't wonder you can't believe it," said Tom.

"Believe it. But come—tell me all about the abominable hoax."

"The accusation was made by Miss Belle Westerly."

And then he told the whole story.

"This is terrible!" said De Witt, when he had finished. "Oh, my poor Bertha. Is she utterly stricken down? Capt. Graylum, compose yourself. Tom, take care of him—I am going to the Westerlys."

And he hurried from the room.

While this scene was taking place, Mrs. Westerly and Belle were sitting in their own sumptuous parlour. Oh, how wan and pale was Belle! No more the roses on her cheeks. But suddenly Mrs. Westerly broke the silence and said:

"So Mr. Gildersleeve has returned? I wonder where he will stay?"

"Oh, there will be places enough, I fancy," replied Belle, trying to speak lightly.

"I wonder if that cousin is still in the city?" queried Mrs. Westerly.

Belle shuddered in spite of herself as she remembered Tom's threat.

"I wonder how Mr. Gildersleeve will take the tidings of Bertha? Belle, do you believe there was an engagement?"

"I never thought so," replied Belle, after a moment. "Others, though, may have been more observing."

"I am sorry the thing was ever done," said Mrs. Westerly, thoughtfully. "Still, I did it, as I thought, for the best."

"Then she relapsed into silence, and soon after she quitted the parlour. Belle left her seat, turned towards the window, and anxiously looked forth.

"There he is!"

The blood rushed to her cheeks and receded again, and she became faint; but before her visitor was announced she had glided from the room, only, however, to glide back again with a sweet smile, holding out both hands as she exclaimed:

"Captain Gildersleeve, I am happy to meet you; when did you arrive?"

He took only one hand, courteously, almost coldly, for its touch felt like that of a snake to him. He seated himself at her request, but there was in his manner that frozen calm telling of a strong will mastering strong emotions.

"How are your mother and—cousin?" at last he asked, in a strange voice.

"Mother is well. Bertha is—well—I hope."

Her tones faltered in spite of her efforts to speak calmly.

"Bertha is not at home, perhaps you would say?"

"No. I am sorry to say," she commenced, and tears stood in her eyes—tears of agitation, vexation, of fear, not of grief, "Bertha has been unfortunate, and mother is so inflexible that she—"

"Sent her to gaol, perhaps?" exclaimed De Witt.

"Yes. But, Captain Gildersleeve, it was such an outrageous theft. I never would have believed it if I had not seen—"

She hesitated.

"Seen what?" asked De Witt, his eye, cold, and to her remorselessly cruel, fastened on her face.

"Why, seen her with some of the articles in her possession. Believe me, I would have done anything to save her."

"And you did all you could? You said, 'She did not do this thing—she has been misrepre-

sented? And you fell on your knees, begging your mother to have mercy, and not have taken to that cage of unclean birds? Speak, Miss Belle. Did you plead thus for your cousin?"

"She is not my cousin save by marriage," replied Belle, who had grown white and frightened.

"Oh, not your cousin save by marriage. Then it did not matter to you. Not a connection of the fashionable Westerlys—only a young, fair, friendless girl—too fair, perhaps. I wonder not, Miss Belle, you had no heart to plead for her." And he made her a chilling bow. "But you say you are certain Miss Graylum committed the theft?"

"I have said it, sir," replied Belle, with dignity.

"And this you are willing to declare in court on oath?"

"In court, and on oath!" said Belle, starting back.

"When is the trial to come off, Miss Belle?" he asked, not noticing her agitation.

"Trial? There will be no trial. I will not appear against her. I—"

"There is to be a trial, and soon, too. But remember, Bertha is not the poor, friendless girl you fancied her to be. Some way the truth must come out; some way she must be vindicated. My wife must have no stain upon her reputation."

Taking up his hat he left her, almost speechless, for the words "my wife" fell like cold iron on the bewildered senses of Belle. Then she gave way, and, flinging herself upon the chair, she cried:

"I have lost my soul for nothing. For nothing—for nothing."

"Bertha!"

"De Witt!"

In those two words all was expressed. Oh, the tears of joy that Bertha wept in his arms.

At last, through her tears, she asked:

"And you do not think me guilty?"

"Guilty, my love—my Bertha. Could you think so for a minute? No, you are even dearer to me now."

"Then I am happy, whatever comes."

"Not as happy as you will be soon. Bertha, can you bear a great blessing?"

"De Witt, what can you mean?"

"How long has your father been dead?" he asked, his arm still around her waist.

"My father!" was all she could gasp.

"Has it never occurred to you, darling, that you might possibly see him again?"

But he had no need to say more, for she glided from his arms and fled into those of the man who now entered, saying:

"Father, father! Is it really you! Oh, indeed I am happy."

"My child—my Bertha—my Bertha!" was all Captain Graylum could say. And so we leave the three.

A crowded court-room witnessed the entrance of the prisoner charged with theft. Rumour had said she was young and beautiful, and, being a relative of the rich Westerlys, many fashionable people were present.

Bertha, simply dressed, came in leaning on the arm of young Gildersleeve, whose glance showed how proud he was of his burden. Belle was soon in the witness-box, and her story was soon told, when, almost fainting, she left the room for a few minutes. When she returned her strength deserted her again, for her eyes saw in the place she had just left Louise, her dressing-maid. She entered as the counsel was saying:

"Well, you can go on now and state your evidence."

"I came home that night about a quarter to twelve, and we—Carrie and I—went into Miss Bertha's room to light our lamp, when we heard a footstep, and I was frightened, so I sprang for the closet; and I saw Miss Belle enter the room. I pulled Carrie to signify she must look. She

found the key of the trunk, then she got down and opened it and took something in her hand; I then saw her put the chain in, and then something else; and then she—"

The witness was silenced. Mrs. Westerly had thrown back her veil, disclosing a horror-stricken face; she was endeavouring to unfasten the bonnet of her daughter, who had fainted.

The trial lasted only two hours, and the jury, without quitting their seats, rendered a verdict of not guilty; the crowd cheered, and many were the congratulations Bertha received.

What a day it was for Bertha. Her father beside her, her lover more devoted than ever. It was only saddened by the thought of Belle Westerly.

Two months later, De Witt and Bertha were married amid the congratulations of many friends. And thus we leave them with their happiness. Again has the old saying been verified, that truth will out. J. H. D.

FACETIE.

IN THE STREET.

SMITH (noticing some excavations): "Halloa! what are they up to here, eh, Brown?"

BROWN: "Oh, strengthening the drains."

SMITH: "Good gracious! I always thought the drains too strong!" —Fun.

A DISMISSAL.

MATILDA JANE, of Putney Pier,
Of me you shall not win renown—
You thought to make me play the part
Of laughing-stock to all the town.
No more beguiled, I'm getting riled,
I'd like to swear (by anger fired)
A specimen of servant girls
You are not one to be desired.

Matilda Jane, of Putney Pier,
At length I spot your little game;
You pick from ev'ry plate of mind,
And treat my bottles much the same.
How can you take from my sweet cake
The bit that all foundation saps?
A simple dumpling made of flour
Is worth a hundred stolen scraps.

Matilda Jane, of Putney Pier,
Some meeker master you must find;
If you've a taste for taking "fizz"
Go—search for one who doesn't mind.
You've meat and drink enough, I think;
I care not if you do deny
The "line" of pork upon those plates
Is not more cold to you than I.

Matilda Jane, of Putney Pier,
You put strange memories in my
head;
Where has that soldier person flown?
Your sister's husband, so you said.
Pooh! I despise your low replies,
At such attacks I simply sneer;
The man has had not, I suppose,
My sample cask of bitter beer?

Matilda Jane, of Putney Pier,
A grim inspector's in the hall,
A bobby's at the kitchen door,
And both are waiting till I call.
You held your course without remorse
To turn my "dips" to kitchen fat,
And though you talk until you're hoarse
I won't believe it was the cat.

What's that? Jane, of Putney Pier,
These things, you say, where'er you
went
As "perks" you've had 'em all your
life?
So cooks I've heard, do represent.
How'er it be, it seems to me
It's time these pilferings should
cease;
Kind hearts are more than perquisites,

And simple faith than pots of grease.

I know you, Jane, of Putney Pier;
With selfishness you are imbued—
The languid light of your dull eyes
Displays no sense of gratitude.
I waste my health amassing wealth,
And, while to find you bread and
cheese
I occupy my precious time,
You needs must play such pranks as
these:

Jane, oh! Jane, of Putney Pier,
If time were heavy on your hands
Could you not clean the kitchen grate,
Or polish up the cruet-stands?
Bat with some organ-boy, no doubt,
Costumed as organ-girl, you'll show,
For you and I must promptly part—
Matilda Jane, you'll have to go.—Fun.

"LIKE A BEARD."

YOUTH: "Yes, it is curious I have no beard. I can't think who I take after. My grandfather had a splendid one."

HAIR CUTTER: "Oh, perhaps you take after your grandmother." —Fun.

A JUVENILE ACROBATIC FEAT.

GRANDPAPA: "What on earth is the matter with you, Tommy? You have been crying all the morning."

TOMMY: "So would you cry, too, grandpapa, if you fell down twice without getting up once." —Fun.

A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

ARE members of the Lower House entitled to conclude their speeches with peer-orations? —Funny Folks.

A FRIENDLY HINT.

YOUNG HAWBUCK (who doesn't know that patches and powder have come in): "And in Germany you will drink the waters, of course, Miss Vavasour?"

MISS V.: "No, I detest them."

Y. H.: "Still, they are capital for the complexion. Pimples disappear by magic; a few draughts, and you'll need no more sticking-plaster." —Funny Folks.

GUITAR-LONG WITH YOU, DO!

THE "Spanish Students" may plume themselves upon their proficiency on the national instrument; but it would not, on that account, be quite fair to describe them as "guitar-red and feathered." —Funny Folks.

WAR SLANG.

A TELEGRAM from South America states that "Warlike operations are paralysed." This medical form of expression might well be extended, till we shall be told that "Hostile demonstrations are stricken with epilepsy," or "The campaign is at present suffering from rheumatism." —Funny Folks.

A VENIAL MISTAKE.

NEW BEAUTY (unversed as yet in the mysteries of high life): "Who's that wonderful old gentleman?"

THE CAPTAIN: "Sir Digby de Rigby, a Hampshire baronet; one of the oldest in England. James the First's creation, you know."

NEW BEAUTY (determined to be surprised at nothing): "Indeed! How well preserved he is! I shouldn't have thought him more than seventy or eighty!" —Punch.

A MALICIOUS TRICK.

A MISCHIEVOUS rustic, owing his neighbour a grudge, mixed a quantity of Anti-Fat with his pig's barley-meal. —Punch.

A DEFINITION.

(Metropolitan Railway Station. Swell in taking change drops a penny. Looks at it wistfully, but leaves it.)

BRITISH WORKMAN (pouncing on it, to bystander): "There, that's what I call a perfect gentleman." —Punch.

(Pouches the coin.)

CLUB SKETCHES.—CAUSE AND EFFECT.

"WHY does Brooks snub Snooks?"
 "Because Snooks snubs Brooks."
 "Why does Snooks toady Brooks?"
 "Because Brooks snubs Snooks." —Punch.

THE MISER'S PRESENT.

A CERTAIN old gentleman, very rich and still more stingy, is in the habit of wearing his clothes to the last thread. One of his friends, meeting him, exclaimed:

"They told me that you had a new hat, and I'll be hanged if you haven't!"

"Oh, yes," said the miser, looking as if he were a trifle ashamed of himself, "you see my wife kept telling me that the old one was a good deal worn out. Well, yesterday was my wife's birthday, and I got myself a new hat for her birthday present."

FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD.

(On Ramsgate Sands.)

LITERARY MAN'S BRIDE (a recent addition to his other responsibilities, breaking in upon his perusal of the leaders for the sixth time in twelve minutes): "I was just thinking, dear, what a relief this must be to you after all the noise and confusion of that horrid Fleet Street." —Judy.

SPEED THE PLOUGH!

A WAG, at a recent agricultural dinner, made an agreeable fool of himself by proposing the toast and sentiment of "small profits and quick returns," explaining that quick returns of rent by the landlord were needed to permit even small profits for the farmer. —Punch.

A HUNGRY MAN.

A COUNTRYMAN, seating himself at a fashionable restaurant with the intention of taking a hearty dinner, summoned a waiter and made known his purpose. The latter skipped briskly away, and finally returned with a handsomely bound bill of fare, which he opened and placed before the guest, who, pushing it away, scornfully observed:

"Oh, come now, you can't cram no literature down me; vittals is what I want—vittals—and party darned quick, too."

SIX THINGS TO BE PROUD OF.

(By a Child of Impulse.)

1. Not to have written a book.
2. Not to have given a recitation.
3. Not to have appeared in "Vanity Fair."
4. Not to have been presented with a testimonial.
5. Not to have been offered knighthood.
6. Not to be buried in Westminster Abbey.

—Punch.

AN "UNPROTECTED FEMALE" FASHION.

(A lady was seen recently at the Zoo with a real snake as a bracelet.)

UNPROTECTED: "Stand off, sir, or you will find I have a friend who will protect me."

INTRODUCER: "Nonsense! Those fangs are not—"

UNPROTECTED: "Deadly? Yes, absolutely—to monkeys!" —Funny Folks.

TRUTH MUST BE SPOKEN.

THEY had gathered in tears in the anteroom to weep over and discuss the virtues of the beautiful Mme. de B., cut off in the flower of her age, whose body lay in the adjoining apartment.

"What a pity," said a sympathising friend, "for her to die in the flower of her age, at twenty-eight!"

"Thirty," said a cousin of the deceased, and burying her face in her handkerchief, gave way to a fresh burst of grief.

THE COBBLER'S PRIZE.

SOME years ago a cobbler from the Emerald Isle went to America and opened a shop in an old house which stood over the water, being supported in the rear by piles. Being diligent

and frugal, he soon saved a few pounds, when one day he was accosted by an agent of a well-known lottery company, and was persuaded to invest. In a few days he was notified that he had won twenty pounds. Upon receiving his money he started out for a little recreation, got gloriously tight, and squandered not only his prize, but all of his hard-earned savings. He then returned to his bench, full of repentance. After several months of hard labour his pocket-book was again filled, when the agent again called, and he was again induced to try his luck. This time he won one hundred pounds. He immediately gathered up his "kit," consisting of bench, tools, etc., and threw them out of the back window into the water, saying, as he did so, "Twenty pounds made me crazy, and one hundred will kill me, sure."

"KIND WORDS."

How often do our hearts grow weary
 Of the busy cares of life,
 And the future dark and dreary

When we think of earthly strife;
 But often is the sad heart lifted
 From the depths of deep despair,
 By words of kindness gently spoken,
 Which cheer our hearts when filled
 With care.

How often, too, a kind word cheers us
 When our cross seems hard to bear;
 'Tis then that kind words gently
 spoken

Drive away all thoughts of care;
 How often, when some weary traveller
 Walks the long and crooked way,
 Would turn aside from sin and danger
 If kindly shown the other way.

When affliction overtakes us,
 And our hearts grow sad from pain,
 'Tis then that words of kindness
 always

Soothe the wildly throbbing brain;
 And when death seems to be near us,
 Kind words of God's redeeming love
 Makes heaven's pathway bright and
 cheerful

When we think of joys above.

Then let us speak a kind word ever
 To those whose lives are filled with
 woe,

And cheer the weary laden stranger
 Through this life where'er we go,
 And when we reach that land in
 heaven,

Where I trust we all will meet.
 May God in words of loving kindness
 Receive us at the mercy seat. D. H.

THE GRECIAN MAID.

WHEN the Turks captured the Grecian island, Candia, they found two girls of remarkable beauty and accomplishments, whom they carried off as slaves to the Turkish seraglio. One of them had a circle of friends and acquaintances, the other was an orphan, with few friends and no relatives. They were, however, devotedly attached to each other, having resided together since infancy. After having dwelt in the harem for some time, one of them, the orphan, by making strenuous exertions, and at the peril of her life, saved that of the Turkish princess. When this came to the ears of the sultan, he ordered her to be brought before him, and then bade her ask whatever she would of him, assuring her, however hard her request, it should be granted. She modestly but nobly refused the gift he proffered her, but pleaded most eloquently, not for her own freedom, but for that of her friend, portraying in lively colours the joy that would fill the hearts of her parents and friends were she restored to them.

The sultan was moved to tears. "Go, generous girl," he said, "go back to the home of your youth, and take with you the friend for whom you would sacrifice yourself, and without whom even freedom would be slavery."

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

BAKED PUDDING (LEMON).—Mix the following ingredients well together, in the order in which they are placed: Moist sugar one-quarter pound; bread crumbs six ounces; butter one and a-half ounces; eggs, well beaten, three; lemon peel grated, and juice, two; bake one and a-half hours in a moderate oven. To be eaten cold.

CUSTARD PUDDING.—Into half a pint of milk put the peel of half a lemon very finely shred; when it boils, put in an ounce of lump sugar, take out the peel, and pour the milk on two eggs well beaten. Put the custard into a basin or tart dish, and set it in a saucepan with boiling water reaching only half-way up to the basin. Do not let the water boil, but keep it just bubbling. In about twenty minutes the custard should be set. It may be eaten either hot or cold, and any flavour may be substituted for that of lemon peel.

CUP PUDDINGS.—Three eggs, their weight in flour, butter, and sugar; whip the eggs well separately, and the butter to a cream, then stir in the flour gently, and mix all together. Bake it twenty minutes in small pudding cups. They may be flavoured with bitter almond or lemon peel. Served with wine sauce.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A MAN was gored to death on the Norfolk estate of the Prince of Wales by a bull which recently attacked another man. The Prince ordered the animal to be killed.

LADIES abroad now carry to evening receptions or the opera floral baskets in place of bouquets. The most fashionable are filled with English violets and pale yellow tea roses and buds.

PARLIAMENT could not separate until eight days after the introduction of the Appropriation Bill. As this bill was introduced on Aug. 9, the session consequently closed on Saturday.

It is stated that the property taken by the Khedive when he abdicated was estimated as worth £4,000,000, of which between £200,000 and £300,000 was in cash, from the public treasury.

A HANDSOME park of twenty acres in extent was opened on Saturday at Heywood, near Bury. The park is the gift of the Queen, on whom it devolved through the intestacy of Mr. Newhouse, a manufacturer, who was killed in a railway accident six years ago. The park was opened with a procession three miles long.

THE French navy have adopted an apparatus for distilling salt water at sea. The steam passes two cones, where it is aerated by being condensed into air current. It is then purified by circulation through animal charcoal, and pure water is the result. The French Academy of Science awarded a prize of 6,000 dollars to the inventor.

It is proposed to convert Manchester into a seaport capable of accommodating steamers of the largest class. The cost of the work is estimated at £3,500,000, and it is calculated that there would be a saving of nearly a million of money a year.

A WRITER suggests a new vocation for women, namely, that women ought to be gardeners. At a time when agriculture is decaying and fruit seems to be the last resort of some districts, while women are feeling most deeply their exclusion from the ordinary walks of life, why should they not take up a profession to which there is no barred door, and which is suited to their case? The idea is not a bad one, and those who organise such movements might do worse than pay some attention to it.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

JOHN S.—If the landlord undertook to keep the outside in good condition we think you could recover in the county court the value of the carpet spoilt. Whether you could leave the house before the three years have expired is doubtful. Perhaps you had better give the landlord notice that if within seven days the repairs are not executed, you will either call in a tradesman and send him the bill or remove at the first convenient moment.

SMOKING.—Will some seaman in H.M. Navy kindly inform "Landlubber" how to make the thick roll tobacco which is so much made and used by them?

MAUD T.—Having lived in America some years, it will require time to eradicate the peculiar manner of speaking. Mix in society, observe and listen to others, and tone down all exaggerations of speech. We are pleased to hear that you appreciate our literary efforts; continue to peruse the LONDON READER, and you will not fail to profit thereby.

T. W.—The best thing you could use is castor oil. It will not prevent the leather from taking a polish, and would make old boots look almost like new.

CLARA.—Try Oldridge's Balm of Columbia, which many of our correspondents affirm strengthens the hair, and prevents baldness and the hair turning grey.

T. V. C.—There are different opinions with respect to the commencement and duration of the Dark Ages. The term is applied in its widest sense to that period of intellectual depression in the history of Europe from the establishment of the barbarian ascendancy in the fifth century to the revival of learning about the beginning of the fifteenth, thus nearly corresponding in extent with the mediæval ages. The last of the ancient authors was Boethius, who died about 524. From that time intellectual darkness is said to have spread over Europe with inconceivable rapidity. The darkest period was about the seventh century.

JOS.—Central America comprises five independent republics—Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and San Salvador.

LOUIS S.—If the gentleman has written to you, informing you that he should send you the papers, and intimating a desire to know whether you received them or not, you should answer his note. But if he merely sends the papers without writing to you on the subject it would be proper for you to wait till you see him before referring to the matter.

H. H.—We think your cheapest and best course would be to send the plate to a London house to be electroplated. Pringle's, 21, Wilderness Row, E.C., is a good old firm.

ALBERT E.—The Colonial Office is in Downing Street, London, S.W.

FRANK.—You should devote your spare time to study, and go to school, if possible, in the winter. Some of the greatest men we have ever had in this country were situated similarly to yourself when young. They managed to get a sufficient education, and worked their way from obscurity to celebrity. Improve every spare moment you have; that is one of the greatest secrets of getting an education.

ANNE W.—It would be discreet not to present a young lady with an engagement ring until she had ceased to wear the one given to her by a former lover. Twelve months is not a very long engagement, but it is long enough if everything else is propitious.

H. S. D.—Your scheme for "elevating" yourself, as you call it, is not founded on good judgment, but on a morbid dissatisfaction with your present situation. It would be far better for you to sympathise with the life which is around you, and look to your relatives for counsel and such help as they can give. They are better and truer friends than anyone you would find in the career on which you so long to enter on. If you pay heed to this advice you will see how good it is when you shall have a daughter of your own as old as you are now.

INVALID.—Your best way would be to get some trustworthy friend who is going to some city where there are jewellers who know the value of such things to take a few specimens of your supposed gems with him and have them tested. In that way you could get some notion of their value.

SIDNEY, twenty-one, fair, dark brown hair, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a young lady about the same age, of a loving disposition.

HARRY, twenty, dark, medium height, fond of home and music, would like to correspond with a domestic servant residing in or near Newcastle with a view to matrimony; about eighteen.

LOVING CHARLIE, twenty-four, a seaman in the Royal Navy, medium height, fair, good-looking, would like to correspond with a thoroughly domesticated young lady about twenty.

DAISY, VIOLET, and LILY, three friends, would like to correspond with three seamen in the Royal Navy. Daisy is twenty, dark, domesticated. Violet is eighteen, tall, of a loving disposition. Lily is sixteen, fair, fond of home and children. "Daisy, Violet, and Lily" must forward full names and addresses.

JOE THE MARINE and SIDE ARMS, two marines in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. Joe the Marine is twenty, medium height, good-looking, fond of children. Side Arms is twenty-two, dark.

CATTAIL, a seaman in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with a young lady. He is twenty, fond of music and dancing, curly hair.

WILLIE, twenty, a corporal in the Royal Engineers, medium height, fair, loving, would like to correspond with a young lady about eighteen.

JENNIE and MAGGIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Jennie is eighteen, dark hair and eyes, medium height, of a loving disposition, domesticated. Maggie is twenty, brown hair and eyes, medium height, fond of music. Respondents must be about twenty-two, tall, fond of home.

E. B. and L. B., cousins, wish to correspond with two young men. E. B. is sixteen, dark, brown eyes. L. B. is sixteen, fair, blue eyes.

SPARKIE JACK and ROYAL FUNNEL, two seamen in the Royal Navy, wish to correspond with two young ladies about nineteen. Sparkie Jack is twenty, medium height, dark hair and eyes, of a loving disposition. Royal Funnel is nineteen, fair, blue eyes, medium height, fond of music and dancing.

THE FARMER'S WAITING.

If I had told her in the spring

The old, old story briefly,
When sparrow and robin began to sing,
And the ploughing was over, chiefly!

But haste makes waste, and the story sweet,
I reasoned, will keep through the sowing,
Till I drop the corn, and sow the wheat,
And give them a chance for growing.

Had I even told the tale in June,
When the wind through the grass was blowing,
Instead of thinking it rather too soon,
And waiting till after the mowing!

Or had I hinted, out under the stars,
That I knew a story worth hearing,
Lingering to put up the pasture bars,
Nor wait to do the shearing!

Now the barn is full, and so is the bin,
But I've grown wise without glory,
Since love is the crop not gathered in—
For my neighbour told her the story.

T. B.

PINK ROSE, good-looking, domesticated, would like to correspond with a tall young man about twenty with a view to matrimony.

BOOKER, BLOSSOM, SCRANBAG JACK, and BUNT REEFER, four seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with four young ladies. Booker is twenty-two, medium height, dark, fond of music, dark eyes. Blossom is twenty-one, fair, light hair, blue eyes, good-looking. Scrانبag Jack is twenty, medium height, fair, Auburn hair, hazel eyes, good-tempered. Bunt Reeper is twenty-one, tall, good-looking, fair, light curly hair, grey eyes, fond of children.

NODDY'S DARLING, nineteen, tall, fair, brown hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a seaman in the Royal Navy, tall, dark, and good-looking.

THOMAS, HENRY, and WALTER, three friends, would like to correspond with three young ladies residing in or near Liverpool. Thomas is twenty, fair, fond of home, of a loving disposition. Henry is fifteen, Auburn hair, blue eyes, fond of home and music. Walter is nineteen, dark, fond of music and dancing. Respondents must not exceed twenty.

ROVING BOB, twenty-eight, a widower, with two children, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony.

R. E. McD., a private in the 92nd Highlanders, would like to correspond with a young lady about twenty, of a loving disposition, fond of home, domesticated, and good-looking.

W. M., H. H., W. S., and H. C., four seamen in the Royal Navy, wish to correspond with four young ladies with a view to matrimony. W. M. is twenty-four, handsome, Auburn hair, hazel eyes, tall, of a loving disposition. H. H. is twenty-seven, tall, light brown hair, hazel eyes, fond of children. W. S. is twenty-three, brown hair, blue eyes, tall, handsome, loving. H. C. is twenty-six, medium height, light hair, blue eyes, fond of children. Respondents must be young, fond of home and music.

F. E., twenty-one, a seaman in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with a young lady about twenty, good-looking, with a view to matrimony.

C. O. B. and W. B., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. C. O. B. is dark, medium height, good-looking, fond of children. W. B. is loving, tall, dark, good-looking. Respondents must be twenty, good-looking.

NINEPIN BLOCK and CAT HEAD STOPPER, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. Ninepin Block is nineteen, medium height, fond of music and dancing. Cat Head Stopper is twenty, hazel eyes, dark, of a loving disposition.

LOVELY NELL, twenty-one, dark, medium height, and loving, would like to correspond with a respectable young gentleman.

CENTAUR and STRADY GEORGE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies about twenty. Centaur is tall, good-looking, of a loving disposition. Strady George is fair, medium height, light blue eyes.

BRIGHT JENNY and LOVELY ANNIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. Jenny is twenty-one, medium height, fair, loving. Annie is twenty-seven, dark, fond of home and children, medium height, blue eyes.

LILLIE, twenty-seven, medium height, brown hair, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition, and fond of children, would like to correspond with a gentleman about thirty with a view to matrimony.

POPPY, eighteen, fair, golden hair, blue eyes, tall, would like to correspond with a good-looking young man with a view to matrimony. "Poppy" must forward full name and address.

CLARA and KATE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Clara is dark, brown hair, hazel eyes, medium height, good-tempered, of a loving disposition. Kate is tall, light hair, dark blue eyes, and loving.

GRUMMET STRAP and ELLIOTT'S EYES, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Grummet Strap is twenty-three, medium height, dark hair, fair, fond of music. Elliott's Eyes is twenty-four, dark hair, blue eyes, fond of children. Respondents must be between twenty and twenty-five.

TRUE BLUE and TOM BOWLING, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. True Blue is twenty, medium height, fair. Tom Bowling is twenty-two, dark. Respondents must be good-looking, fond of home.

HARD CASE, DEAD NIP, and J. H. B., three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies with a view to matrimony. Hard Case is twenty-one, light curly hair, blue eyes, loving. Dead Nip is twenty, dark hair and eyes, fond of children. J. H. B. is twenty-one, light hair, blue eyes. Respondents must be thoroughly domesticated.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

PRIMROSE is responded to by—D. M. H., tall, fair, and fond of music.

GEORGE by—Annie, twenty-one, medium height, dark, brown eyes, fond of home.

ELDER by—Maggie, twenty, fair, light hair, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition.

MADOLIN's address required by—Harry, nineteen, tall, dark hair and eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of music and dancing.

KNEELER by—Lily, twenty, tall, dark, fond of home and music.

HOLYSTONE by—Rose, nineteen, medium height, dark, fond of home, domesticated.

JOHN C. by—Annie.

JAMES by—Carrie P., domesticated, dark brown hair and eyes, fond of home.

ALICE by—Sweet William, twenty-three, tall, dark hair, hazel eyes.

RED LIGHT by—Kate.

WHITE LIGHT by—Maude.

GREEN LIGHT by—Edith.

LOUISA U. C. by—T. S. B., fond of home and music.

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